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THE  
BRITISH ESSAYISTS;

WITH

PREFACES,

HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL,

BY

A. CHALMERS, F.S.A.

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VOL. XVII.

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LONDON:

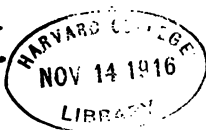
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# RAMBLER.

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Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,  
Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes.  
HOR. EPIST. I. I. 14.

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THE  
RAMBLER.

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No. 61. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1750.

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*Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret  
Quem, nisi mendosum et mendacem.—*

HOR. EPIST. i. 16. 39.

False praise can charm, unreal shame control—  
Whom but a vicious or a sickly soul?

FRANCIS.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ IT is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty curiosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligence, and not only never to receive the current of report till it has satiated the greatest part of the nation, but at last to find it muddled in its course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every channel through which it flowed.

“ One of the chief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the schemes of the politic, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious: what changes of public measures are approaching; who is likely to be crushed in the collision of parties; who is climbing to the top

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of power, and who is tottering on the precipice of disgrace. But as it is very common for us to desire most what we are least qualified to obtain, I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifications which my present situation can afford it ; for, being placed in a remote country, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostications of events no longer doubtful, and to consider the expediency of schemes already executed or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deception in my prospects, like a man pointing his telescope at a remote star, which, before the light reaches his eye, has forsaken the place from which it was emitted.

“ The mortification of being thus always behind the active world in my reflections and discoveries, is exceedingly aggravated by the petulance of those whose health, or business, or pleasure, brings them hither from London. For, without considering the insuperable disadvantages of my condition, and the unavoidable ignorance which absence must produce, they often treat me with the utmost superciliousness of contempt, for not knowing what no human sagacity can discover ; and sometimes seem to consider me as a wretch scarcely worthy of human converse, when I happen to talk of the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the healths of the dead, when I warn them of mischiefs already incurred, or wish for measures that have been lately taken. They seem to attribute to the superiority of their intellects what they only owe to the accident of their condition, and think themselves indisputably entitled to airs of insolence and authority, when they find another ignorant of facts, which, because they echoed in the streets of London, they suppose equally public in all other places, and known where they could neither be seen, *related, nor conjectured.*

“ To this haughtiness they are indeed too much encouraged by the respect which they receive amongst us, for no other reason than that they come from London. For no sooner is the arrival of one of these disseminators of knowledge known in the country, than we crowd about him from every quarter, and by innumerable inquiries flatter him into an opinion of his own importance. He sees himself surrounded by multitudes, who propose their doubts, and refer their controversies to him, as to a being descended from some nobler region, and he grows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, solves all difficulties, and sets all objections at defiance.

“ There is, in my opinion, great reason for suspecting that they sometimes take advantage of this reverential modesty, and impose upon rustic understandings with a false show of universal intelligence ; for I do not find that they are willing to own themselves ignorant of any thing, or that they dismiss any inquirer with a positive and decisive answer. The court, the city, the park, and exchange, are to those men of unbounded observation equally familiar, and they are alike ready to tell the hour at which stocks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

“ A short residence at London entitles a man to knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a despotic and dictatorial power of prescribing to the rude multitude, whom he condescends to honour with a biennial visit ; yet, I know not well upon what motives I have lately found myself inclined to cavil at this prescription, and to doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

“ It is well remembered here, that, about seven years ago, one Frolic, a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken

from the school in this parish, and sent up to London to study the law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a genius designed by nature for extraordinary performances, he was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten ; nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill fortune, till last summer a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolic was come down in the first post-chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity that one of his postillions had broken his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand : but that Mr. Frolic seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

“ Mr. Frolic next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green, and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new, and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice, of the modish world. He showed us the deformity of our skirts and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper size were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our clothes, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

“ When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topics of his discourse, are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them ; but never *fails to hint*, how much they will be deficient, at

their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is to know the town he has not indeed hitherto informed us, though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great value, or so difficult attainment.

“But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have heard of the union of various characters in single persons, but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man’s narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero ; whatever has elevated the wit ; whatever has endeared the lover, are all concentrated in Mr. Frolic, whose life has, for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

“I question whether all the officers in the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand times on the point of perishing, sometimes by the terrors of foolish women, in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge, under which he has rencountered mountainous waves and dreadful cataracts.

“Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the monument ; he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches ; he has been surrounded by robbers without number ; he has headed parties at the playhouse ; he has scaled the windows of every toast of whatever condition ; he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals ; he has slept upon bulks, *he has cut chairs*, he has bilked coachmen ; he has

rescued his friends from bailiffs, has knocked down the constable, has bullied the justice, and performed many other exploits, that have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

“ But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery ; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius ; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolic has ratified his pretensions ; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins the clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur ; that no public entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed or favoured it ; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination ; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

“ With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted ; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace ; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolic.

“ Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr. Frolic has more wit, or knowledge, or courage, than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company, he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt ; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place *in the first ranks of humanity*, I cannot but conclude,

that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolic thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

“ I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect ; and, therefore, I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolic. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise ; but if he has swelled among us with empty boasts, and honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustic sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom to some region of more credulity.

“ I am, &c.

“ RURICOLA.”

## No. 62. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1750.

*Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus,  
 Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum :  
 Nunc ego Medæa vellem frænare dracones,  
 Quos habuit fugiens arva, Corinthæ, tua ;  
 Nunc ego jactandas optarem sumere pennas,  
 Sive tuas, Perseu ; Dædale, sive tuas.*

OVID.

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand  
 First sow'd with teeming seed the furrow'd land :  
 Now to Medea's dragons fix my reins,  
 That swiftly bore her from Corinthian plains ;  
 Now on Dædalian waxen pinions stray,  
 Or those which wafted Perseus on his way.

F. LEWIS.

## “ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ I AM a young woman of a very large fortune, which, if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world ; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now on the borders of twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

“ My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit, and, to repair the consequences of *expensive* attendance and negligence of his affairs, *married a lady* much older than himself, who had

lived in the fashionable world till she was considered as an encumbrance upon parties of pleasure, and, as I can collect from incidental informations, retired from gay assemblies just time enough to escape the mortification of universal neglect.

“ She was, however, still rich, and not yet wrinkled ; my father was too distressfully embarrassed to think much on any thing but the means of extrication, and though it is not likely that he wanted the delicacy which polite conversation will always produce in understandings not remarkably defective, yet he was contented with a match, by which he might be set free from inconveniences, that would have destroyed all the pleasures of imagination, and taken from softness and beauty the power of delighting.

“ As they were both somewhat disgusted with their treatment in the world, and married, though without any dislike of each other, yet principally for the sake of setting themselves free from dependence on caprice or fashion, they soon retired into the country, and devoted their lives to rural business and diversions.

“ They had not much reason to regret the change of their situation ; for their vanity, which had so long been tormented by neglect and disappointment, was here gratified with every honour that could be paid them. Their long familiarity with public life made them the oracles of all those who aspired to intelligence or politeness. My father dictated politics, my mother prescribed the mode, and it was sufficient to entitle any family to some consideration, that they were known to visit at Mrs. Courtly’s.

“ In this state they were, to speak in the style of novelists, made happy by the birth of your correspondent. My parents had no other child, I was therefore not brow-beaten by a saucy brother, or lost in a multitude of coheiresses, whose fortunes being equal,



would probably have conferred equal merit, and procured equal regard ; and as my mother was now old, my understanding and my person had fair play, my inquiries were not checked, my advances towards importance were not repressed, and I was soon suffered to tell my own opinions, and early accustomed to hear my own praises.

“ By these accidental advantages I was much exalted above the young ladies with whom I conversed, and was treated by them with great deference. I saw none who did not seem to confess my superiority, and to be held in awe by the splendour of my appearance ; for the fondness of my father made himself pleased to see me dressed, and my mother had no vanity nor expenses to hinder her from concurring with his inclinations.

“ Thus, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much desire after any thing beyond the circle of our visits ; and here I should have quietly continued to portion out my time among my books, and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour the entertainment of each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney coach, some frolic at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly, display the magnificence of a birth-night, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

“ I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties ; can enumerate, *with exact chronology*, the whole succession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and

harlequins ; can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashions ; and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to head-dresses, dances, and operas.

“ You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impression, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings some new pleasure, and life is diversified with an unexhausted succession of felicity.

“ I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by shewing me its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again ; that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt ; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers ; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age ; and that there is now neither politeness, nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

“ With this answer I was kept quiet for several years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had ge-

nerally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance, and as we grew intimate, gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splendour, the mirth, the happiness of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

“I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate and impartial comparison, that I am excelled by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgement, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in public, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, extasies, and despair; has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

“I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in public, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

“But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of *nothing else*; and if you will not sooth my impatience, *heighten my ideas*, and animate my hopes, you may

write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction.

“ RHODOCLIA.”

No. 63. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1750.

— *Habebat sæpe ducentos,  
Sæpe decem servos ; modò reges, atque tetrarchas,  
Omnia magna loquens : modò, sit mihi mensa tripes, et  
Concha salis puri, et toga, quæ defendere frigus,  
Quamvis crassa, queat.*—

HOR. SAT. i. 3. 11.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train ;  
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain  
At morn, of kings and governors he prates ;  
At night,—‘ A frugal table, O ye fates,  
‘ A little shell the sacred salt to hold,  
‘ And clothes, though coarse, to keep me from the cold.’

FRANCIS.

It has been remarked, perhaps, by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state, which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance, or chosen with deliberation ; we are always disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagine the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable.

able in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the larger share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects, which we only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts into action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts, it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it, and, however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal or ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity, and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must, therefore, be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy, may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion, in favour of something

not yet experienced, and too much readiness to believe, that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes and external efficient.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, in which other classes of men are equally entangled. We often change a lighter for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge, though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that error cannot justly be reproached, which reason could not obviate, nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and comprehensive of human life, with all its intricacies of combination and varieties of connexion, is beyond the power of mortal intelligencies. Of the state with which practice has not acquainted us, we snatch a glimpse, we discern a point, and regulate the rest by passion, and by fancy. In this inquiry every favourite prejudice, every innate desire, is busy to deceive us. We are unhappy, at least less happy than our nature seems to admit; we necessarily desire the melioration of our lot; what we desire we very reasonably seek, and what we seek we are naturally eager to believe that we have found. Our confidence is often disappointed, but our reason is not convinced, and there is no man who does not hope for something which he has not, though perhaps his wishes lie unactive, because he foresees the difficulty of attainment. As among the numerous students of Hermetic philosophy, not one appears to have desisted from the task of transmutation, from conviction of its impossibility, but from weariness of toil, or impatience of delay, a *broken body, or exhausted fortune.*

Irresolution and mutability are often the faults of men, whose views are wide, and whose imagination is vigorous and excursive, because they cannot confine their thoughts within their own boundaries of action, but are continually ranging over all the scenes of human existence, and, consequently, are often apt to conceive that they fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start new possibilities of happiness. Thus they are busied with a perpetual succession of schemes, and pass their lives in alternate elation and sorrow, for want of that calm and immoveable acquiescence in their condition, by which men of slower understandings are fixed for ever to a certain point, or led on in the plain beaten track, which their fathers and grandsires have trod before them.

Of two conditions of life equally inviting to the prospect, that will always have the disadvantage which we have already tried; because the evils which we have felt we cannot extenuate; and though we have, perhaps from nature, the power as well of aggravating the calamity which we fear, as of heightening the blessing we expect, yet in those meditations which we indulge by choice, and which are not forced upon the mind by necessity, we have always the art of fixing our regard upon the more pleasing images, and suffer hope to dispose the lights by which we look upon futurity.

The good and ill of different modes of life are sometimes so equally opposed, that perhaps no man ever yet made his choice between them upon a full conviction and adequate knowledge; and, therefore, fluctuation of will is not more wonderful, when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is *discovered* on the other side, and the resolutions

which are suggested by the nicest examination, are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father, long eminent in conspicuous employments: His father, harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect others, and gradually felt a desire of greatness, excited by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed that authority and influence which he had resolved to exert for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and was in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being either seduced or driven from his honest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the public, and sometimes with the schemes of the ministry. He was by degrees wearied with perpetual struggles to unite policy and virtue, and went back to retirement as the shelter of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind by a blameless example of private virtue. Here he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence; but finding that corruption increased, and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself *again summoned to posts of public trust from which*



new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and by vice, by too much or too little thought ; yet inconstancy, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for inquiry and experiment, and he that steadily endeavours at excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in choosing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolutely follows a rough and winding path, will sooner reach the end of his journey, than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of daylight in looking for smoother ground and shorter passages.

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## NO. 64. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1750.

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*Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.*

SALLUST. BELL. CAT.

To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

WHEN Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity ? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated, if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends, Such was the opinion of *this great master of human life*, concerning the in-

frequency of such an union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility or veneration, crowded about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and its continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependence.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. *Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to*

go wrong by their own judgement, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and showing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be an useful counsellor, who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to humankind, and makes every man, without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestable evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. *But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, de*

rives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other ; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgement, but that they should attract the affections ; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity ; not only useful in exigencies, but pleasing in familiar life ; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency, is generally requisite an uniformity of opinions, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions ; yet such friends are to be shown rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it, and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of public opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incidents, extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it ; to be silent, is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray : and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess *the importance of the question?* What then re-

mains but contradiction and debate? and from those what can be expected, but acrimony and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments, and intercourse of civility, may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and, therefore, to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship, between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations, and, when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may, perhaps, be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can pre-

serve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration, but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

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No. 65. TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1750.

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— *Garrit aniles*

*Ex re fabellas.*—

HOR. SAT. ii. 6. 77.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,  
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

OBIDAH, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous

with rest ; he was animated with hope ; he was incited by desire ; he walked swiftly forward over the valleys, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices ; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills ; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring : all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength ; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation ; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds, whom the heat had assembled in the shade ; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains, and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the

known and common track ; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly ; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted ; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the



ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and savage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and solitude surrounded him; the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills,

—Κάραϊς στυγρῇ, καὶ ῥυαὶ ρέουσι.

Ἐς πυργώτατον ἐπιβάλλεται ῥέγων ὄρος.

Τῷ δὲ τι νεώτερον δούτο ἐς ὄρος ἑλθὼν στυγρῇ.

MON. II. A. 452.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry showers,  
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;  
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, 'Tell me,' said the hermit, 'by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before.' Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

‘ Son,’ said the hermit, ‘ let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full of expectation ; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides ; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation ; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for a while, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another ; we, in time, lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance ; *and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had*

not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted, that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors, and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life.'

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No. 66. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1750.

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—*Pauci dignoscere possunt*

*Vera bona, atque illis multùm diversa, remotâ  
Erroris nebulâ.*—

JUV. SAT. X. 2.

—How few

Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue!  
How void of reason are our hopes and fears!

DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till, perhaps, the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures may be justly numbered among *the subjects of censure and complaint.*

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and counted among vulgar errors the dread of pain and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning, to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, add fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers, having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they, therefore, lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these *men have been* very useful monitors, and have left

many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shown that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which, when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and, therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is no where to be found, and, though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their own nature, confined to a very small number; and the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of vanity; *which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of*

the longest beard and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill-directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and, without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentleman, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frightened away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions which are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts; and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partisans and abettors, often not less exasperated against each other, than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness : but, perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or error, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expense of wisdom and of virtue ; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears ? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilette is lost in vanity, when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroic virtue ?

In every instance of vanity it will be found, that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches ; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invi-

dious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason and corrupters of the world: and, since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

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No. 67. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1750.

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Αἱ δ' ἱλπίδες βέσκουσι φυγάδας, ὡς λόγος,  
Καλῶς βλέπουσι γ' ὄμμασιν, μίλλουσι δέ.

EURIP. PHOENISS. 407.

Exiles, the proverb says, subsist on hope.  
Delusive hope still points to distant good,  
To good that mocks approach.

THERE is no temper so generally indulged as hope; other passions operate by starts on particular occasions, or in certain parts of life; but hope begins with the first power of comparing our actual with our possible state, and attends us through every stage and period, always urging us forward to new acquisitions, and holding out some distant blessing to our view, promising us either relief from pain, or increase of happiness.

Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity, would, without this comfort, be insupportable; nor does it appear that the happiest lot of terrestrial existence can set us above the want of this general blessing; or that life, when the gifts of nature and of fortune are accumulated upon it, would not still be wretched, were it not



elevated and delighted by the expectation of some new possession, of some enjoyment yet behind, by which the wish shall be at last satisfied, and the heart filled up to its utmost extent.

Hope is, indeed, very fallacious, and promises what it seldom gives ; but its promises are more valuable than the gifts of fortune, and it seldom frustrates us without assuring us of recompensing the delay by a greater bounty.

I was musing on this strange inclination which every man feels to deceive himself, and considering the advantages and dangers proceeding from this gay prospect of futurity, when, falling asleep, on a sudden I found myself placed in a garden, of which my sight could descry no limits. Every scene about me was gay and gladsome, light with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes ; the ground was painted with all the variety of spring, and all the choir of nature was singing in the groves. When I had recovered from the first raptures with which the confusion of pleasure had for a time entranced me, I began to take a particular and deliberate view of this delightful region. I then perceived that I had yet higher gratifications to expect, and that, at a small distance from me, there were brighter flowers, clearer fountains, and more lofty groves, where the birds, which I yet heard but faintly, were exerting all the power of melody. The trees about me were beautiful with verdure, and fragrant with blossoms ; but I was tempted to leave them by the sight of ripe fruits, which seemed to hang only to be plucked. I therefore walked hastily forwards, but found, as I proceeded, that the colours of the field faded at my approach, the fruit fell before I reached it, the birds flew still singing before me, and, though I pressed onward with great celerity, I was still in sight of pleasures of which I could not yet gain the posses-

sion, and which seemed to mock my diligence, and to retire as I advanced.

Though I was confounded with so many alternations of joy and grief, I yet persisted to go forward, in hopes that these fugitive delights would in time be overtaken. At length I saw an innumerable multitude of every age and sex, who seemed all to partake of some general felicity; for every cheek was flushed with confidence, and every eye sparkled with eagerness: yet each appeared to have some particular and secret pleasure, and very few were willing to communicate their intentions, or extend their concern beyond themselves. Most of them seemed, by the rapidity of their motion, too busy to gratify the curiosity of a stranger, and therefore I was content for a while to gaze upon them, without interrupting them with troublesome inquiries. At last I observed one man worn with time, and unable to struggle in the crowd; and, therefore, supposing him more at leisure, I began to accost him, but he turned from me with anger, and told me he must not be disturbed, for the great hour of projection was now come, when Mercury should lose his wings, and slavery should no longer dig the mine for gold.

I left him and attempted another, whose softness of mien, and easy movement, gave me reason to hope for a more agreeable reception: but he told me, with a low bow, that nothing would make him more happy than an opportunity of serving me, which he could not now want, for a place which he had been twenty years soliciting would soon be vacant. From him I had recourse to the next, who was departing in haste to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who, by the course of nature, could not live long. He that followed was preparing to dive for treasure in a new invented bell; and another was on the point of *discovering the longitude*.

Being thus rejected wheresoever I applied myself for information, I began to imagine it best to desist from inquiry, and try what my own observation would discover : but seeing a young man, gay and thoughtless, I resolved upon one more experiment, and was informed that I was in the garden of Hope, the daughter of Desire, and that all those whom I saw thus tumultuously bustling round me, were incited by the promises of Hope, and hastening to seize the gifts which she held in her hand.

I turned my sight upward, and saw a goddess in the bloom of youth sitting on a throne : around her lay all the gifts of fortune, and all the blessings of life were spread abroad to view ; she had a perpetual gaiety of aspect, and every one imagined that her smile, which was impartial and general, was directed to himself, and triumphed in his own superiority to others, who had conceived the same confidence from the same mistake.

I then mounted an eminence, from which I had a more extensive view of the whole place, and could with less perplexity consider the different conduct of the crowds that filled it. From this station I observed, that the entrance into the garden of Hope was by two gates, one of which was kept by Reason, and the other by Fancy. Reason was surly and scrupulous, and seldom turned the key without many interrogatories and long hesitation ; but Fancy was a kind and gentle portress, she held her gate wide open, and welcomed all equally to the district under her superintendency ; so that the passage was crowded by all those who either feared the examination of Reason, or had been rejected by her.

From the gate of Reason there was a way to the throne of Hope, by a craggy, slippery, and winding path, called the Streight of Difficulty, which those who entered with the permission of the guard endea-

voured to climb. But though they surveyed the way very carefully before they began to rise, and marked out the several stages of their progress, they commonly found unexpected obstacles, and were obliged frequently to stop on the sudden, where they imagined the way plain and even. A thousand intricacies embarrassed them, a thousand slips threw them back, and a thousand pitfalls impeded their advance. So formidable were the dangers, and so frequent the miscarriages, that many returned from the first attempt, and many fainted in the midst of the way, and only a very small number were led up to the summit of Hope, by the hand of Fortitude. Of these few, the greater part, when they had obtained the gift which Hope had promised them, regretted the labour which it cost, and felt in their success the regret of disappointment ; the rest retired with their prize, and were led by Wisdom to the bowers of Content.

Turning then towards the gate of Fancy, I could find no way to the seat of Hope ; but though she sat full in view, and held out her gifts with an air of invitation, which filled every heart with rapture, the mountain was, on that side, inaccessiblely steep, but so channelled and shaded, that none perceived the impossibility of ascending it, but each imagined himself to have discovered a way to which the rest were strangers. Many expedients were indeed tried by this industrious tribe, of whom some were making themselves wings, which others were contriving to actuate by the perpetual motion. But with all their labour, and all their artifices, they never rose above the ground, or quickly fell back, nor ever approached the throne of Hope, but continued still to gaze at a distance, and laughed at the slow progress of those whom they saw toiling in the Streight of Difficulty.

Part of the favourites of Fancy, when they had entered the garden, without making, like the rest,

an attempt to climb the mountain, turned immediately to the vale of Idleness, a calm and undisturbed retirement, from whence they could always have Hope in prospect, and to which they pleased themselves with believing that she intended speedily to descend. These were indeed scorned by all the rest; but they seemed very little affected by contempt, advice, or reproof, but were resolved to expect at ease the favour of the goddess.

Among this gay race I was wandering, and found them ready to answer all my questions, and willing to communicate their mirth: but turning round I saw two dreadful monsters entering the vale, one of them I knew to be Age, and the other Want. Sport and revelling were now at an end, and an universal shriek of affright and distress burst out and awaked me.

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No. 68. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1750.

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*Vivendum rectè, cum propter plurima, tum his  
Præcipuè causis, ut linguas mancipiorum  
Contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima servi.*

JUV. SAT. IX. 118.

Let us live well: were it alone for this,  
The baneful tongues of servants to despise:  
Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds  
An easy entrance to ignoble minds.

HERVEY.

THE younger Pliny has very justly observed, that of actions that deserve our attention, the most splendid *are not always the greatest*. Fame, and wonder, and

applause, are not excited but by external and adventitious circumstances, often distinct and separate from virtue and heroism. Eminence of station, greatness of effect, and all the favours of fortune, must concur to place excellence in public view ; but fortitude, diligence, and patience, divested of their show, glide unobserved through the crowd of life, and suffer and act, though with the same vigour and constancy, yet without pity and without praise.

This remark may be extended to all parts of life. Nothing is to be estimated by its effect upon common eyes and common ears. A thousand miseries make silent and invisible inroads on mankind, and the heart feels innumerable throbs, which never break into complaint. Perhaps, likewise, our pleasures are for the most part equally secret, and most are borne up by some private satisfaction, some internal consciousness, some latent hope, some peculiar prospect, which they never communicate, but reserve for solitary hours and clandestine meditation.

The main of life is, indeed, composed of small incidents and petty occurrences ; of wishes for objects not remote, and grief for disappointments of no fatal consequence ; of insect vexations which sting us and fly away, impertinencies which buzz a while about us, and are heard no more ; of meteorous pleasures which dance before us and are dissipated ; of compliments which glide off the soul like other music, and are forgotten by him that gave, and him that received them.

Such is the general heap out of which every man is to cull his own condition : for, as the chymists tell us, that all bodies are resolvable into the same elements, and that the boundless variety of things arises from the different proportions of very few ingredients ; so a few pains and a few pleasures are all the *materials of human life*, and of these the proportions

are partly allotted by Providence, and partly left to the arrangement of reason and of choice.

As these are well or ill disposed, man is for the most part happy or miserable. For very few are involved in great events, or have their thread of life entwisted with the chain of causes on which armies or nations are suspended ; and even those who seem wholly busied in public affairs, and elevated above low cares or trivial pleasures, pass the chief part of their time in familiar and domestic scenes ; from these they come into public life, to these they are every hour recalled by passions not to be suppressed ; in these they have the reward of their toils, and to these at last they retire.

The great end of prudence is, to give cheerfulness to those hours, which splendour cannot gild, and acclamation cannot exhilarate ; those soft intervals of unbended amusement, in which a man shrinks to his natural dimensions, and throws aside the ornaments or disguises, which he feels in privacy to be useless encumbrances, and to lose all effect when they become familiar. To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.

It is, indeed, at home that every man must be known by those who would make a just estimate either of his virtue or felicity ; for smiles and embroidery are alike occasional, and the mind is often dressed for show in painted honour and fictitious benevolence.

Every man must have found some whose lives, in every house but their own, was a continual series of hypocrisy, and who concealed under fair appearances bad qualities, which, whenever they thought themselves out of the reach of censure, broke out from their restraint, like winds imprisoned in their caverns ; and whom every one had reason to love, but

they whose love a wise man is chiefly solicitous to procure. And there are others who, without any show of general goodness, and without the attractions by which popularity is conciliated, are received among their own families as bestowers of happiness, and revered as instructors, guardians, and benefactors.

The most authentic witnesses of any man's character are those who know him in his own family, and see him without any restraint or rule of conduct, but such as he voluntarily prescribes to himself. If a man carries virtue with him into his private apartments, and takes no advantage of unlimited power or probable secrecy ; if we trace him through the round of his time, and find that his character, with those allowances which mortal frailty must always want, is uniform and regular, we have all the evidence of his sincerity, that one man can have with regard to another ; and, indeed, as hypocrisy cannot be its own reward, we may, without hesitation, determine that his heart is pure.

The highest panegyric, therefore, that private virtue can receive, is the praise of servants. For however vanity or insolence may look down with contempt on the suffrage of men undignified by wealth, and unenlightened by education, it very seldom happens that they commend or blame without justice. Vice and virtue are easily distinguished. Oppression, according to Harrington's aphorism, will be felt by those that cannot see it ; and, perhaps, it falls out very often that, in moral questions, the philosophers in the gown, and the livery, differ not so much in their sentiments, as in their language, and have equal power of discerning right, though they cannot point it out to others with equal address.

There are very few faults to be committed in solitude, *or without some agents, partners, confederates,*



or witnesses ; and, therefore, the servant must commonly know the secrets of a master, who has any secrets to intrust ; and failings, merely personal, are so frequently exposed by that security which pride and folly generally produce, and so inquisitively watched by that desire of reducing the inequalities of condition, which the lower orders of the world will always feel, that the testimony of a menial domestic can seldom be considered as defective for want of knowledge. And though its impartiality may be sometimes suspected, it is at least as credible as that of equals, where rivalry instigates censure, or friendship dictates palliations.

The danger of betraying our weakness to our servants, and the impossibility of concealing it from them, may be justly considered as one motive to a regular and irreproachable life. For no condition is more hateful or despicable than his who has put himself in the power of his servant ; in the power of him whom, perhaps, he has first corrupted by making him subservient to his vices, and whose fidelity he, therefore, cannot enforce by any precepts of honesty or reason. It is seldom known that authority, thus acquired, is possessed without insolence, or that the master is not forced to confess, by his tameness or forbearance, that he has enslaved himself by some foolish confidence. And his crime is equally punished, whatever part he takes of the choice to which he is reduced ; and he is from that fatal hour, in which he sacrificed his dignity to his passions, in perpetual dread of insolence or defamation ; of a controller at home, or an accuser abroad. He is condemned to purchase, by continual bribes, that secrecy which bribes never secured, and which, after a long course of submission, promises, and anxieties, he will find violated in a fit of rage, or in a frolic of drunkenness.

*To dread no eye, and to suspect no tongue, is the*

great prerogative of innocence; an exemption granted only to invariable virtue. But guilt has always its horrors and solitudes; and to make it yet more shameful and detestable, it is doomed often to stand in awe of those to whom nothing could give influence or weight, but their power of betraying.

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No. 69. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1750.

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*Flet quoque, ut in speculo rugas adspexit aniles,  
Tyndaris; et secum, cur sit bis rapta, requirit.  
Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas,  
Omnia destruitis: vitiataque dentibus ævi  
Paulatim lentâ consumitis omnia morte.*

OID. MET. XV. 232.

The dreaded wrinkles when poor Helen spied,  
Ah! why this second rape?—with tears she cried.  
Time, thou devourer, and thou, envious age,  
Who all destroy with keen corroding rage,  
Beneath your jaws, whate'er have pleased or please,  
Must sink, consumed by swift or slow degrees.

ELPHINSTON.

AN old Greek epigrammatist, intending to show the miseries that attend the last stage of man, imprecates upon those who are so foolish as to wish for long life, the calamity of continuing to grow old from century to century. He thought that no adventitious or foreign pain was requisite, that decrepitude itself was an epitome of whatever is dreadful, and nothing could be added to the curse of age, but that it should be extended beyond its natural limits.

The most indifferent or negligent spectator can, indeed, scarcely retire without heaviness of heart, from a view of the last scenes of the tragedy of life, in which he finds those who, in the former parts of the drama, were distinguished by opposition of conduct, contrariety of designs, and dissimilitude of personal qualities, all involved in one common distress, and all struggling with affliction which they cannot hope to overcome.

The other miseries which waylay our passage through the world, wisdom may escape, and fortitude may conquer : by caution and circumspection we may steal along with very little to obstruct or incommode us ; by spirit and vigour we may force a way, and reward the vexation of contest by the pleasures of victory. But a time must come when our policy and bravery shall be equally useless ; when we shall all sink into helplessness and sadness, without any power of receiving solace from the pleasures that have formerly delighted us, or any prospect of emerging into a second possession of the blessings that we have lost.

The industry of man has, indeed, not been wanting in endeavours to procure comforts for these hours of dejection and melancholy, and to gild the dreadful gloom with artificial light. The most usual support of old age is wealth. He whose possessions are large, and whose chests are full, imagines himself always fortified against invasions on his authority. If he has lost all other means of government, if his strength and his reason fail him, he can at last alter his will ; and, therefore, all that have hopes must likewise have fears, and he may still continue to give laws to such as have not ceased to regard their own interest.

This is, indeed, too frequently the citadel of the dotard, the last fortress to which age retires, and in *which he makes the stand against the upstart race*

that seizes his domains, disputes his commands, and cancels his prescriptions. But here, though there may be safety, there is no pleasure; and what remains is but a proof that more was once possessed.

Nothing seems to have been more universally dreaded by the ancients than orbity, or want of children; and, indeed, to a man who has survived all the companions of his youth, all who have participated his pleasures and his cares, have been engaged in the same events, and filled their minds with the same conceptions, this full-peopled world is a dismal solitude. He stands forlorn and silent, neglected or insulted, in the midst of multitudes, animated with hopes which he cannot share, and employed in business which he is no longer able to forward or retard; nor can he find any to whom his life or his death are of importance, unless he has secured some domestic gratification, some tender employments, and endeared himself to some whose interest and gratitude may unite them to him.

So different are the colours of life, as we look forward to the future, or backward to the past; and so different the opinions and sentiments which this contrariety of appearance naturally produces, that the conversation of the old and young ends generally with contempt or pity on either side. To a young man entering the world, with fulness of hope, and ardour of pursuit, nothing is so unpleasing as the cold caution, the faint expectations, the scrupulous diffidence which experience and disappointments certainly infuse; and the old man wonders in his turn that the world never can grow wiser, that neither precepts nor testimonies can cure boys of their credulity and sufficiency; and that not one can be convinced that snares are laid for him, till he finds himself entangled.

*Thus one generation is always the scorn and wonder of the other, and the notions of the old and young*

are like liquors of different gravity and texture which never can unite. The spirits of youth sublimed by health, and volatilized by passion, soon leave behind them the phlegmatic sediment of weariness and deliberation, and burst out in temerity and enterprise. The tenderness, therefore, which nature infuses, and which long habits of beneficence confirm, is necessary to reconcile such opposition ; and an old man must be a father, to bear with patience those follies and absurdities which he will perpetually imagine himself to find in the schemes and expectations, the pleasures and the sorrows of those who have not yet been hardened by time, and chilled by frustration.

Yet it may be doubted whether the pleasure of seeing children ripening into strength, be not overbalanced by the pain of seeing some fall in the blossom, and others blasted in their growth ; some shaken down by storms, some tainted with cankers, and some shrivelled in the shade ; and whether he that extends his care beyond himself, does not multiply his anxieties more than his pleasures, and weary himself to no purpose, by superintending what he cannot regulate.

But though age be to every order of human beings sufficiently terrible, it is particularly to be dreaded by fine ladies, who have had no other end or ambition than to fill up the day and the night with dress, diversions, and flattery, and who, having made no acquaintance with knowledge or with business, have constantly caught all their ideas from the current prattle of the hour, and been indebted for all their happiness to compliments and treats. With these ladies, age begins early, and very often lasts long ; it begins when their beauty fades, when their mirth loses its sprightliness, and their motion its ease. From that time all which gave them joy vanishes from *about them* ; they hear the praises bestowed on *others*, which used to swell their bosoms with exult-

ation. They visit the seats of felicity, and endeavour to continue the habit of being delighted. But pleasure is only received when we believe that we give it in return. Neglect and petulance inform them that their power and their value are past ; and what then remains but a tedious and comfortless uniformity of time, without any motion of the heart or exercise of the reason ?

Yet, however age may discourage us by its appearance from considering it in prospect, we shall all by degrees certainly be old ; and therefore we ought to inquire what provision can be made against that time of distress ? what happiness can be stored up against the winter of life ? and how we may pass our latter years with serenity and cheerfulness ?

If it has been found by the experience of mankind, that not even the best seasons of life are able to supply sufficient gratifications, without anticipating uncertain felicities, it cannot surely be supposed, that old age, worn with labours, harassed with anxieties, and tortured with diseases, should have any gladness of its own, or feel any satisfaction from the contemplation of the present. All the comfort that can now be expected must be recalled from the past, or borrowed from the future ; the past is very soon exhausted, all the events or actions of which the memory can afford pleasure are quickly recollected ; and the future lies beyond the grave, where it can be reached only by virtue and devotion.

Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of decaying man. He that grows old without religious hopes, as he declines into imbecility, and feels pains and sorrows incessantly crowding upon him, falls into a gulph of bottomless misery, in which every reflection must plunge him deeper, and where he finds only new gradations of anguish and precipices of horror.

## No. 70. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1750.

—*Argentæ proles,  
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior ære.*

OVID. MET. l. 114.

Succeeding times a silver age behold,  
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.

DRYDEN.

HESIOD, in his celebrated distribution of mankind, divides them into three orders of intellect. "The first place," says he, "belongs to him that can by his own powers discern what is right and fit, and penetrate to the remoter motives of action. The second is claimed by him that is willing to hear instruction, and can perceive right and wrong when they are shown him by another; but he that has neither acuteness nor docility, who can neither find the way by himself nor will be led by others, is a wretch without use or value."

If we survey the moral world, it will be found, that the same division may be made of men with regard to their virtue. There are some whose principles are so firmly fixed, whose conviction is so constantly present to their minds, and who have raised in themselves such ardent wishes for the approbation of God, and the happiness with which he has promised to reward obedience and perseverance, that they rise above all other cares and considerations, and uniformly examine every action and desire, by comparing it with the divine commands. There are others in a kind of equipoise between good and ill; *who are moved*, on the one part, by riches or pleasure,

by the gratifications of passion and the delights of sense ; and, on the other, by laws of which they own the obligation, and rewards of which they believe the reality, and whom a very small addition of weight turns either way. The third class consists of beings immersed in pleasure, or abandoned to passion, without any desire of higher good, or any effort to extend their thoughts beyond immediate and gross satisfactions.

The second class is so much the most numerous, that it may be considered as comprising the whole body of mankind. Those of the last are not very many, and those of the first are very few ; and neither the one nor the other fall much under the consideration of the moralist, whose precepts are intended chiefly for those who are endeavouring to go forward up the steep of virtue, not for those who have already reached the summit, or those who are resolved to stay for ever in their present situation.

To a man not versed in the living world, but accustomed to judge only by speculative reason, it is scarcely credible that any one should be in this state of indifference, or stand undetermined and unengaged, ready to follow the first call to either side. It seems certain, that either a man must believe that virtue will make him happy, and resolve therefore to be virtuous, or think that he may be happy without virtue, and therefore cast off all care but for his present interest. It seems impossible that conviction should be on one side, and practice on the other ; and that he who has seen the right way should voluntarily shut his eyes, that he may quit it with more tranquillity. Yet all these absurdities are every hour to be found ; the wisest and best men deviate from known and acknowledged duties, by inadvertency or surprise ; and most are good no longer than while temptation is away, than while their passions are



without excitements, and their opinions are free from the counteraction of any other motive.

Among the sentiments which almost every man changes as he advances into years, is the expectation of uniformity of character. He that, without acquaintance with the power of desire, the cogency of distress, the complications of affairs, or the force of partial influence, has filled his mind with the excellence of virtue, and, having never tried his resolution in any encounters with hope or fear, believes it able to stand firm, whatever shall oppose it, will be always clamorous against the smallest failure, ready to exact the utmost punctualities of right, and to consider every man that fails in any part of his duty, as without conscience and without merit ; unworthy of trust or love, of pity or regard ; as an enemy whom all should join to drive out of society, as a pest which all should avoid, or as a weed which all should trample.

It is not but by experience, that we are taught the possibility of retaining some virtues, and rejecting others, or of being good or bad to a particular degree. For it is very easy to the solitary reasoner to prove, that the same arguments by which the mind is fortified against one crime are of equal force against all, and the consequence very naturally follows, that he whom they fail to move on any occasion, has either never considered them, or has by some fallacy taught himself to evade their validity ; and that, therefore, when a man is known to be guilty of one crime, no further evidence is needful of his depravity and corruption.

Yet such is the state of all mortal virtue, that it is always uncertain and variable, sometimes extending to the whole compass of duty, and sometimes shrinking into a narrower space, and fortifying only a few avenues of the heart, while all the rest is left *open to the incursions of appetite*, or given up to the

dominion of wickedness. Nothing therefore is more unjust than to judge of man by too short an acquaintance and too slight inspection ; for it often happens, that in the loose, and thoughtless, and dissipated, there is a secret radical worth, which may shoot out by proper cultivation ; that the spark of Heaven, though dimmed and obstructed, is yet not extinguished, but may, by the breath of counsel and exhortation, be kindled into flame.

To imagine that every one who is not completely good is irrecoverably abandoned, is to suppose that all are capable of the same degrees of excellence ; it is, indeed, to exact from all, that perfection which none ever can attain. And since the purest virtue is consistent with some vice, and the virtue of the greatest number with almost an equal proportion of contrary qualities, let none too hastily conclude that all goodness is lost, though it may for a time be clouded and overwhelmed ; for most minds are the slaves of external circumstances, and conform to any hand that undertakes to mould them, roll down any torrent of custom in which they happen to be caught, or bend to any importunity that bears hard against them.

It may be particularly observed of women, that they are for the most part good or bad, as they fall among those who practise vice or virtue ; and that neither education nor reason gives them much security against the influence of example. Whether it be that they have less courage to stand against opposition, or that their desire of admiration makes them sacrifice their principles to the poor pleasure of worthless praise, it is certain, whatever be the cause, that female goodness seldom keeps its ground against laughter, flattery, or fashion.

For this reason, every one should consider himself as *intrusted not only* with his own conduct, but with

that of others ; and as accountable, not only for the duties which he neglects, or the crimes that he commits, but for that negligence and irregularity which he may encourage or inculcate. Every man, in whatever station, has, or endeavours to have, his followers, admirers, and imitators, and has therefore the influence of his example to watch with care ; he ought to avoid not only crimes, but the appearance of crimes, and not only to practise virtue, but to applaud, countenance, and support it. For it is possible that, for want of attention, we may teach others faults from which ourselves are free, or, by a cowardly desertion of a cause which we ourselves approve, may pervert those who fix their eyes upon us, and, having no rule of their own to guide their course, are easily misled by the aberrations of that example which they choose for their direction.

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No. 71. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1750.

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*Vivere quod prospero pauper, nec inutilis annis,  
Da veniam : properat vivere nemo satis.*

MART. EP. ii. 90. 3.

True, sir, to live I haste, your pardon give,  
For tell me, who makes haste enough to live ?

F. LEWIS.

MANY words and sentences are so frequently heard in the mouths of men, that a superficial observer is inclined to believe that they must contain some *primary principle*, some great rule of action, which it

is proper always to have present to the attention, and by which the use of every hour is to be adjusted. Yet, if we consider the conduct of those sententious philosophers, it will often be found, that they repeat these aphorisms, merely because they have somewhere heard them, because they have nothing else to say, or because they think veneration gained by such appearances of wisdom ; but that no ideas are annexed to the words, and that, according to the old blunder of the followers of Aristotle, their souls are mere pipes or organs, which transmit sounds, but do not understand them.

Of this kind is the well known and well attested position, that life is short, which may be heard among mankind by an attentive auditor, many times a-day, but which never yet, within my reach of observation, left any impression upon the mind ; and, perhaps, if my readers will turn their thoughts back upon their old friends, they will find it difficult to call a single man to remembrance, who appeared to know that life was short till he was about to lose it.

It is observable that Horace, in his account of the characters of men, as they are diversified by the various influence of time, remarks, that the old man is *dilator, spe longus*, given to procrastination, and inclined to extend his hopes to a great distance. So far are we generally from thinking what we often say of the shortness of life, that at the time when it is necessarily shortest, we form projects which we delay to execute, indulge such expectations as nothing but a long train of events can gratify, and suffer those passions to gain upon us, which are only excusable in the prime of life.

These reflections were lately excited in my mind, by an evening's conversation with my friend Prospero, who, at the age of fifty-five, has bought an estate, and is now contriving to dispose and culti-

vate it with uncommon elegance. His great pleasure is to walk among stately trees, and lie musing in the heat of noon under their shade ; he is therefore maturely considering how he shall dispose his walks and his groves, and has at last determined to send for the best plans from Italy, and forbear planting till the next season.

Thus is life trifled away in preparations to do what never can be done, if it be left unattempted till all the requisites which imagination can suggest are gathered together. Where our design terminates only in our own satisfaction, the mistake is of no great importance ; for the pleasure of expecting enjoyment, is often greater than that of obtaining it, and the completion of almost every wish is found a disappointment ; but when many others are interested in an undertaking, when any design is formed, in which the improvement or security of mankind is involved, nothing is more unworthy either of wisdom or benevolence, than to delay it from time to time, or to forget how much every day that passes over us takes away from our power, and how soon an idle purpose to do an action, sinks into a mournful wish that it had once been done.

We are frequently importuned, by the bacchanalian writers, to lay hold on the present hour, to catch the pleasures within our reach, and remember that futurity is not at our command :

*Τὸ ρόδον ἀπμάζει βαιὸν χρόνον· ἣν δὲ παρίλθης,  
Ζητῶν εὐρήσεις αὐ ρόδον, ἀλλὰ βράτον.*

Soon fades the rose ; once past the fragrant hour,  
The loiterer finds a bramble for a flower.

But surely these exhortations may, with equal propriety, be applied to better purposes ; it may be at *least inculcated*, that pleasures are more safely post-

poned than virtues, and that greater loss is suffered by missing an opportunity of doing good, than an hour of giddy frolic and noisy merriment.

When Baxter had lost a thousand pounds, which he had laid up for the erection of a school, he used frequently to mention the misfortune as an incitement to be charitable while God gives the power of bestowing, and considered himself as culpable, in some degree for having left a good action in the hands of chance, and suffered his benevolence to be defeated for want of quickness and diligence.

It is lamented by Hearne, the learned antiquary of Oxford, that this general forgetfulness of the fragility of life, has remarkably infected the students of monuments and records; as their employment consists first in collecting, and afterwards in arranging or abstracting what libraries afford them, they ought to amass no more than they can digest; but when they have undertaken a work, they go on searching and transcribing, call for new supplies, when they are already overburthened, and at last leave their work unfinished. "It is," says he, "the business of a good antiquary, as of a good man, to have mortality always before him."

Thus not only in the slumber of sloth, but in the dissipation of ill-directed industry, is the shortness of life generally forgotten. As some men lose their hours in laziness, because they suppose, that there is time enough for the reparation of neglect; others busy themselves in providing that no length of life may want employment; and it often happens, that sluggishness and activity are equally surprised by the last summons, and perish not more differently from each other, than the fowl that received the shot in her flight, from her that is killed upon the bush.

Among the *many* improvements made by the last *centuries in human knowledge*, may be numbered

the exact calculations of the value of life ; but whatever may be their use in traffic, they seem very little to have advanced morality. They have hitherto been rather applied to the acquisition of money, than of wisdom ; the computer refers none of his calculations to his own tenure, but persists in contempt of probability, to foretel old age to himself, and believes that he is marked out to reach the utmost verge of human existence, and see thousands and ten thousands fall into the grave.

So deeply is this fallacy rooted in the heart, and so strongly guarded by hope and fear against the approach of reason, that neither science nor experience can shake it, and we act as if life were without end, though we see and confess its uncertainty and shortness.

Divines have, with great strength and ardour, shown the absurdity of delaying reformation and repentance ; a degree of folly indeed, which sets eternity to hazard. It is the same weakness, in proportion to the importance of the neglect, to transfer any care, which now claims our attention, to a future time ; we subject ourselves to needless dangers from accidents which early diligence would have obviated, or perplex our minds by vain precautions, and make provision for the execution of designs, of which the opportunity once missed never will return.

As he that lives longest lives but a little while, every man may be certain that he has no time to waste. The duties of life are commensurate to its duration, and every day brings its task, which if neglected is doubled on the morrow. But he that has already trifled away those months and years, in which he should have laboured, must remember that he has now only a part of that of which the whole is little ; and that since the few moments remaining are to be *considered as the last trust of Heaven, not one is to be lost.*

No. 72. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1750.

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*Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status, et res,  
Tentantem majora, ferè præsentibus æquum.*

HOR. EPIST. i. 17. 23.

Yet Aristippus ev'ry dress became ;  
In every various change of life the same ;  
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,  
Yet to the present held an equal mind.

FRANCIS.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ THOSE who exalt themselves into the chair of instruction, without inquiring whether any will submit to their authority, have not sufficiently considered how much of human life passes in little incidents, cursory conversation, slight business, and casual amusements ; and therefore they have endeavoured only to inculcate the more awful virtues, without condescending to regard those petty qualities, which grow important only by their frequency, and which, though they produce no single acts of heroism, nor astonish us by great events, yet are every moment exerting their influence upon us, and make the draught of life sweet or bitter by imperceptible instillations. They operate unseen and unregarded, as change of air makes us sick or healthy, though we breathe it without attention, and only know the particles that impregnate it by their salutary or malignant effects.

You have shown yourself not ignorant of the value of those *subaltern* endowments, yet have hitherto



neglected to recommend good-humour to the world, though a little reflection will show you that it is the balm of being, the quality to which all that adorns or elevates mankind must owe its power of pleasing. Without good-humour, learning and bravery can only confer that superiority which swells the heart of the lion in the desert, where he roars without reply, and ravages without resistance. Without good-humour virtue may awe by its dignity, and amaze by its brightness ; but must always be viewed at a distance, and will scarcely gain a friend or attract an imitator.

“ Good-humour may be defined a habit of being pleased ; a constant and perennial softness of manner, easiness of approach, and suavity of disposition ; like that which every man perceives in himself, when the first transports of new felicity have subsided, and his thoughts are only kept in motion by a slow succession of soft impulses. Good-humour is a state between gaiety and unconcern ; the act or emanation of a mind at leisure to regard the gratification of another.

“ It is imagined by many, that whenever they aspire to please, they are required to be merry, and to show the gladness of their souls by flights of pleasantry and bursts of laughter. But though these men may be for a time heard with applause and admiration, they seldom delight us long. We enjoy them a little, and then retire to easiness and good-humour, as the eye gazes awhile on eminences glittering with the sun, but soon turns aching away to verdure and to flowers.

“ Gaiety is to good-humour as animal perfumes to vegetable fragrance ; the one overpowers weak spirits, and the other recreates and revives them. Gaiety seldom fails to give some pain ; the hearers either strain their faculties to accompany its towerings, or *are left behind* in envy and despair. Good-humour

boasts no faculties which every one does not believe in his own power, and pleases principally by not offending.

“ It is well known that the most certain way to give any man pleasure, is to persuade him that you receive pleasure from him, to encourage him to freedom and confidence, and to avoid any such appearance of superiority as may overbear and depress him. We see many that by this art only, spend their days in the midst of caresses, invitations, and civilities; and without any extraordinary qualities or attainments, are the universal favourites of both sexes, and certainly find a friend in every place. The darlings of the world will, indeed, be generally found such as excite neither jealousy nor fear, and are not considered as candidates for any eminent degree of reputation, but content themselves with common accomplishments, and endeavour rather to solicit kindness than to raise esteem; therefore in assemblies and places of resort, it seldom fails to happen, that though at the entrance of some particular person every face brightens with gladness, and every hand is extended in salutation, yet if you pursue him beyond the first exchange of civilities, you will find him of very small importance, and only welcome to the company, as one by whom all conceive themselves admired, and with whom any one is at liberty to amuse himself when he can find no other auditor or companion, as one with whom all are at ease, who will hear a jest without criticism, and a narrative without contradiction, who laughs with every wit, and yields to every disputer.

“ There are many whose vanity always inclines them to associate with those from whom they have no reason to fear mortification; and there are times in which the wise and the knowing are willing to receive praise without the labour of deserving it, in

which the most elevated mind is willing to descend, and the most active to be at rest. All, therefore, are at some hour or another fond of companions whom they can entertain upon easy terms, and who will relieve them from solitude, without condemning them to vigilance and caution. We are most inclined to love, when we have nothing to fear, and he that encourages us to please ourselves, will not be long without preference in our affection to those whose learning holds us at the distance of pupils, or whose wit calls all attention from us, and leaves us without importance and without regard.

“It is remarked by prince Henry, when he sees Falstaff lying on the ground, that ‘he could have better spared a better man.’ He was well acquainted with the vices and follies of him whom he lamented, but while his conviction compelled him to do justice to superior qualities, his tenderness still broke out at the remembrance of Falstaff, of the cheerful companion, the loud buffoon, with whom he had passed his time in all the luxury of idleness, who had gladdened him with unenvied merriment, and whom he could at once enjoy and despise.

“You may perhaps think this account of those who are distinguished for their good-humour, not very consistent with the praises which I have bestowed upon it. But surely nothing can more evidently show the value of this quality, than that it recommends those who are destitute of all other excellencies, and procures regard to the trifling, friendship to the worthless, and affection to the dull.

“Good-humour is, indeed, generally degraded by the characters in which it is found; for being considered as a cheap and vulgar quality, we find it often neglected by those that having excellencies of higher reputation and brighter splendour, perhaps imagine *that they have some right to gratify themselves at the*

expense of others, and are to demand compliance, rather than to practise it. It is by some unfortunate mistake that almost all those who have any claim to esteem or love, press their pretensions with too little consideration of others. This mistake, my own interest, as well as my zeal for general happiness, makes me desirous to rectify ; for I have a friend, who, because he knows his own fidelity and usefulness, is never willing to sink into a companion : I have a wife whose beauty first subdued me, and whose wit confirmed her conquest, but whose beauty now serves no other purpose than to entitle her to tyranny, and whose wit is only used to justify perverseness.

“ Surely nothing can be more unreasonable than to lose the will to please, when we are conscious of the power, or show more cruelty than to choose any kind of influence before that of kindness. He that regards the welfare of others, should make his virtue approachable, that it may be loved and copied ; and he that considers the wants which every man feels, or will feel, of external assistance, must rather wish to be surrounded by those that love him, than by those that admire his excellencies, or solicit his favours ; for admiration ceases with novelty, and interest gains its end and retires. A man, whose great qualities want the ornament of superficial attractions, is like a naked mountain with mines of gold, which will be frequented only till the treasure is exhausted.

“ I am, &c.

“ PHILOMIDES.”

## No. 73. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1750.

*Stulte quid ô frustra votis puerilibus optas  
Quæ non ulla tulit, fertque, feretque dies.*

OVID.

Why thinks the fool with childish hope to see  
What neither is, nor was, nor e'er shall be?

KILPINSTON.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ IF you feel any of that compassion which you recommend to others, you will not disregard a case which I have reason, from observation, to believe very common, and which I know by experience to be very miserable. And though the querulous are seldom received with great ardour of kindness, I hope to escape the mortification of finding that my lamentations spread the contagion of impatience, and produce anger rather than tenderness, I write not merely to vent the swelling of my heart, but to inquire by what means I may recover my tranquillity ; and shall endeavour at brevity in my narrative, having long known that complaint quickly tires, however elegant or however just.

“ I was born in a remote county, of a family that boasts alliances with the greatest names in English history, and extends its claims of affinity to the Tudors and Plantagenets. My ancestors, by little and little, wasted their patrimony, till my father had not

enough left for the support of a family, without descending to the cultivation of his own grounds, being condemned to pay three sisters the fortunes allotted them by my grandfather, who is suspected to have made his will when he was incapable of adjusting properly the claims of his children, and who, perhaps without design, enriched his daughters by beggaring his son. My aunts being, at the death of their father, neither young nor beautiful, nor very eminent for softness of behaviour, were suffered to live unsolicited, and by accumulating the interest of their portions, grew every day richer and prouder. My father pleased himself with foreseeing that the possessions of those ladies must revert at last to the hereditary estate, and, that his family might lose none of its dignity, resolved to keep me untainted with a lucrative employment; whenever, therefore, I discovered any inclination to the improvement of my condition, my mother never failed to put me in mind of my birth, and charged me to do nothing with which I might be reproached when I should come to my aunts' estate.

“ In all the perplexities or vexations which want of money brought upon us, it was our constant practice to have recourse to futurity. If any of our neighbours surpassed us in appearance, we went home and contrived an equipage, with which the death of my aunts was to supply us. If any purse-proud upstart was deficient in respect, vengeance was referred to the time in which our estate was to be repaired. We registered every act of civility and rudeness, inquired the number of dishes at every feast, and minutely the furniture of every house, that we might, when the hour of affluence should come, be able to eclipse all their splendour, and surpass all their magnificence.

“ *Upon plans of elegance and schemes of pleasure*

the day rose and set, and the year went round unregarded, while we were busied in laying out plantations on ground not yet our own, and deliberating whether the manor-house should be rebuilt or repaired. This was the amusement of our leisure and the solace of our exigencies; we met together only to contrive how our approaching fortune should be enjoyed; for in this our conversation always ended, on whatever subject it began. We had none of the collateral interests which diversify the life of others with joys and hopes, but had turned our whole attention on one event, which we could neither hasten nor retard, and had no other object of curiosity, than the health or sickness of my aunts, of which we were careful to procure very exact and early intelligence.

“ This visionary opulence for a while soothed our imagination, but afterwards fired our wishes and exasperated our necessities, and my father could not always restrain himself from exclaiming, that ‘ no creature had so many lives as a cat and an old maid.’ At last, upon the recovery of his sister from an ague, which she was supposed to have caught by sparing fire, he began to lose his stomach, and four months afterward sunk into the grave.

“ My mother, who loved her husband, survived him but a little while, and left me the sole heir of their lands, their schemes, and their wishes. As I had not enlarged my conceptions either by books or conversation, I differed only from my father by the freshness of my cheeks and the vigour of my step; and like him, gave way to no thoughts but of enjoying the wealth which my aunts were hoarding.

“ At length the eldest fell ill. I paid the civilities and compliments which sickness requires with the utmost punctuality. I dreamed every night of escutcheons and white gloves, and inquired every morning at an early hour, whether there were any

news of my dear aunt. At last a messenger was sent to inform me that I must come to her without the delay of a moment. I went and heard her last advice, but opening her will, found that she had left her fortune to her second sister.

“ I hung my head ; the younger sister threatened to be married, and every thing was disappointment and discontent. I was in danger of losing irreparably one third of my hopes, and was condemned still to wait for the rest. Of part of my terror I was soon eased ; for the youth, whom his relations would have compelled to marry the old lady, after innumerable stipulations, articles, and settlements, ran away with the daughter of his father’s groom ; and my aunt, upon this conviction of the perfidy of man, resolved never to listen more to amorous addresses.

“ Ten years longer I dragged the shackles of expectation, without ever suffering a day to pass, in which I did not compute how much my chance was improved of being rich to-morrow. At last the second lady died, after a short illness, which yet was long enough to afford her time for the disposal of her estate, which she gave to me after the death of her sister.

“ I was now relieved from part of my misery ; a larger fortune, though not in my power, was certain and unalienable ; nor was there now any danger, that I might at last be frustrated of my hopes by a fret of dotage, the flatteries of a chambermaid, the whispers of a tale-bearer, or the officiousness of a nurse. But my wealth was yet in reversion, my aunt was to be buried before I could emerge to grandeur and pleasure ; and there were yet, according to my father’s observation, nine lives between me and happiness.

“ I, however, lived on, without any clamours of



discontent, and comforted myself with considering that all are mortal, and they who are continually decaying must at last be destroyed.

“ But let no man from this time suffer his felicity to depend on the death of his aunt. The good gentlewoman was very regular in her hours, and simple in her diet, and in walking or sitting still, waking or sleeping, had always in view the preservation of her health. She was subject to no disorder but hypochondriac dejection ; by which, without intention, she increased my miseries, for whenever the weather was cloudy, she would take her bed and send me notice that her time was come. I went with all the haste of eagerness, and sometimes received passionate injunctions to be kind to her maid, and directions how the last offices should be performed ; but if before my arrival the sun happened to break out, or the wind to change, I met her at the door, or found her in the garden, bustling and vigilant, with all the tokens of long life.

“ Sometimes, however, she fell into distempers, and was thrice given over by the doctor, yet she found means of slipping through the gripe of death, and after having tortured me three months at each time with violent alternations of hope and fear, came out of her chamber without any other hurt than the loss of flesh, which in a few weeks she recovered by broths and jellies.

“ As most have sagacity sufficient to guess at the desires of an heir, it was the constant practice of those who were hoping at second hand, and endeavoured to secure my favour against the time when I should be rich, to pay their court, by informing me that my aunt began to droop, that she had lately a bad night, that she coughed feebly, and that she could never climb May hill ; or at least, that the autumn would

carry her off. Thus was I flattered in the winter with the piercing winds of March, and in the summer with the fogs of September. But she lived through spring and fall, and set heat and cold at defiance, till after near half a century, I buried her on the fourteenth of last June, aged ninety-three years five months and six days.

“ For two months after her death I was rich, and was pleased with that obsequiousness and reverence which wealth instantaneously procures. But this joy is now past, and I have returned again to my old habit of wishing. Being accustomed to give the future full power over my mind, and to start away from the scene before me to some expected enjoyment, I deliver up myself to the tyranny of every desire which fancy suggests, and long for a thousand things which I am unable to procure. Money has much less power than is ascribed to it by those that want it. I had formed schemes which I cannot execute, I had supposed events which do not come to pass, and the rest of my life must pass in craving solicitude, unless you can find some remedy for a mind, corrupted with an inveterate disease of wishing, and unable to think on any thing but wants, which reason tells me will never be supplied.

“ I am, &c.

“ CUPIDUS.”

# No. 74. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1750.

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—*Rixatur de lanâ sæpe caprinâ.*—

HOR. EPIST. i. 18. 15.

For nought tormented, she for nought torments.

ELPHINSTON.

MEN seldom give pleasure where they are not pleased themselves ; it is necessary, therefore, to cultivate an habitual alacrity and cheerfulness, that in whatever state we may be placed by Providence, whether we are appointed to confer or receive benefits, to implore or to afford protection, we may secure the love of those with whom we transact. For though it is generally imagined, that he who grants favours, may spare any attention to his behaviour, and that usefulness, will always procure friends ; yet it has been found that there is an art of granting requests, an art very difficult of attainment ; that officiousness and liberality may be so adulterated, as to lose the greater part of their effect ; that compliance may provoke, relief may harass, and liberality distress.

No disease of the mind can more fatally disable it from benevolence, the chief duty of social beings, than ill humour or peevishness ; for though it breaks not out in paroxysms of outrage, nor bursts into clamour, turbulence, and bloodshed, it wears out happiness by slow corrosion, and small injuries incessantly repeated. It may be considered as the canker of life, that destroys its vigour and checks its im-

provement, that creeps on with hourly depredations, and taints and vitiates what it cannot consume.

Peevishness, when it has been so far indulged, as to outrun the motions of the will, and discover itself without premeditation, is a species of depravity in the highest degree disgusting and offensive, because no rectitude of intention nor softness of address can ensure a moment's exemption from affront and indignity. While we are courting the favour of a peevish man, and exerting ourselves in the most diligent civility, an unlucky syllable displeases, an unheeded circumstance ruffles and exasperates; and in the moment when we congratulate ourselves upon having gained a friend, our endeavours are frustrated at once, and all our assiduity forgotten in the casual tumult of some trifling irritation.

This troublesome impatience is sometimes nothing more than the symptom of some deeper malady. He that is angry without daring to confess his resentment, or sorrowful without the liberty of telling his grief, is too frequently inclined to give vent to the fermentations of his mind at the first passages that are opened, and to let his passions boil over upon those whom accident throws in his way. A painful and tedious course of sickness frequently produces such an alarming apprehension of the least increase of uneasiness, as keeps the soul perpetually on the watch, such a restless and incessant solicitude, as no care or tenderness can appease, and can only be pacified by the cure of the distemper, and the removal of that pain by which it is excited.

Nearly approaching to this weakness, is the captiousness of old age. When the strength is crushed, the senses dulled, and the common pleasures of life become insipid by repetition, we are willing to impute our uneasiness to causes not wholly out of *our power*, and please ourselves with fancying that

we suffer by neglect, unkindness, or any evil which admits a remedy, rather than by the decays of nature, which cannot be prevented or repaired. We, therefore, revenge our pains upon those on whom we resolve to charge them ; and too often drive mankind away at the time we have the greatest need of tenderness and assistance.

But though peevishness may sometimes claim our compassion, as the consequence or concomitant of misery, it is very often found, where nothing can justify or excuse its admission. It is frequently one of the attendants on the prosperous, and is employed by insolence in exacting homage, or by tyranny in harassing subjection. It is the offspring of idleness or pride ; of idleness anxious for trifles ; or pride unwilling to endure the least obstruction of her wishes. Those who have long lived in solitude indeed naturally contract this unsocial quality, because having long had only themselves to please, they do not readily depart from their own inclinations ; their singularities therefore are only blameable, when they have imprudently or morosely withdrawn themselves from the world ; but there are others, who have, without any necessity, nursed up this habit in their minds, by making implicit submissiveness the condition of their favour, and suffering none to approach them, but those who never speak but to applaud, or move but to obey.

He that gives himself up to his own fancy, and converses with none but such as he hires to lull him on the down of absolute authority, to sooth him with obsequiousness, and regale him with flattery, soon grows too slothful for the labour of contest, too tender for the asperity of contradiction, and too delicate for the coarseness of truth ; a little opposition offends, a little restraint enrages, and a little difficulty *perplexes him* ; having been accustomed to see every

thing give way to his humour, he soon forgets his own littleness, and expects to find the world rolling at his beck, and all mankind employed to accommodate and delight him.

Tetrica had a large fortune bequeathed to her by an aunt, which made her very early independent, and placed her in a state of superiority to all about her. Having no superfluity of understanding, she was soon intoxicated by the flatteries of her maid, who informed her that ladies, such as she, had nothing to do but take pleasure their own way; that she wanted nothing from others, and had therefore no reason to value their opinion; that money was every thing; and that they who thought themselves ill-treated, should look for better usage among their equals.

Warm with these generous sentiments, Tetrica came forth into the world, in which she endeavoured to force respect by haughtiness of mien and vehemence of language; but having neither birth, beauty, nor wit, in any uncommon degree, she suffered such mortifications from those who thought themselves at liberty to return her insults, as reduced her turbulence to cooler malignity, and taught her to practise her arts of vexation only where she might hope to tyrannize without resistance. She continued from her twentieth to her fifty-fifth year to torment all her inferiors with so much diligence, that she has formed a principle of disapprobation, and finds in every place something to grate her mind and disturb her quiet.

If she takes the air, she is offended with the heat or cold, the glare of the sun, or the gloom of the clouds; if she makes a visit, the room in which she is to be received, is too light, or too dark, or furnished with something which she cannot see without aversion. *Her tea is never of the right sort; the figures*

on the China give her disgust. Where there are children, she hates the gabble of brats ; where there are none, she cannot bear a place without some cheerfulness and rattle. If many servants are kept in a house, she never fails to tell how Lord Lavish was ruined by a numerous retinue ; if few, she relates the story of a miser that made his company wait on themselves. She quarrelled with one family, because she had an unpleasant view from their windows ; with another, because the squirrel leaped within two yards of her ; and with a third, because she could not bear the noise of the parrot.

Of milliners and mantua-makers she is the proverbial torment. She compells them to alter their work, then to unmake it, and contrive it after another fashion ; then changes her mind, and likes it better as it was at first ; then will have a small improvement. Thus she proceeds till no profit can recompense the vexation ; they at last leave the clothes at her house, and refuse to serve her. Her maid, the only being that can endure her tyranny, professes to take her own course, and hear her mistress talk. Such is the consequence of peevishness ; it can be borne only when it is despised.

It sometimes happens that too close an attention to minute exactness, or a too rigorous habit of examining every thing by the standard of perfection, vitiates the temper, rather than improves the understanding, and teaches the mind to discern faults with unhappy penetration. It is incident likewise to men of vigorous imagination to please themselves too much with futurities, and to fret because those expectations are disappointed, which should never have been formed. Knowledge and genius are often enemies to quiet, by suggesting ideas of excellence, which men and the performances of men cannot attain. But let no man rashly determine, that his unwillingness to be pleased

is a proof of understanding, unless his superiority appears from less doubtful evidence ; for though peevishness may sometimes justly boast its descent from learning or from wit, it is much oftener of base extraction, the child of vanity, and nursling of ignorance.

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No. 75. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1750.

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*Diligitur nemo, nisi cui Fortuna secunda est,  
Quæ simul intonuit, proxima quæque fugat.*

OVID.

When smiling Fortune spreads her golden ray,  
All crowd around to flatter and obey :  
But when she thunders from an angry sky,  
Our friends, our flatterers, our lovers fly.

MISS A. W.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ THE diligence with which you endeavour to cultivate the knowledge of nature, manners, and life, will perhaps incline you to pay some regard to the observations of one who has been taught to know mankind by unwelcome information, and whose opinions are the result, not of solitary conjectures, but of practice and experience.

“ I was born to a large fortune, and bred to the knowledge of those arts which are supposed to accomplish the mind, and adorn the person, of a woman.



To these attainments, which custom and education almost forced upon me, I added some voluntary acquisitions by the use of books, and the conversation of that species of men whom the ladies generally mention with terror and aversion under the name of scholars, but whom I have found a harmless and inoffensive order of beings, not so much wiser than ourselves, but that they may receive as well as communicate knowledge, and more inclined to degrade their own character by cowardly submission, than to overbear or oppress us with their learning or their wit.

“ From these men, however, if they are by kind treatment encouraged to talk, something may be gained, which, embellished with elegance and softened by modesty, will always add dignity and value to female conversation ; and from my acquaintance with the bookish part of the world I derived many principles of judgement and maxims of prudence, by which I was enabled to draw upon myself the general regard in every place of concourse or pleasure. My opinion was the great rule of approbation ; my remarks were remembered by those who desired the second degree of fame ; my mien was studied ; my dress was imitated ; my letters were handed from one family to another, and read by those who copied them as sent to themselves ; my visits were solicited as honours ; and multitudes boasted of an intimacy with Melissa, who had only seen me by accident, and whose familiarity had never proceeded beyond the exchange of a compliment, or return of a courtesy.

“ I shall make no scruple of confessing that I was pleased with this universal veneration, because I always considered it as paid to my intrinsic qualities and inseparable merit, and very easily persuaded myself, that fortune had no part in my superiority. When I looked upon my glass I saw youth and *beauty*, with health that might give me reason to

**H**ope their continuance : when I examined my mind, I found some strength of judgement and fertility of fancy ; and was told that every action was grace, and that every accent was persuasion.

“ In this manner my life passed like a continual triumph amidst acclamations, and envy, and courtship, and caresses : to please Melissa was the general ambition, and every stratagem of artful flattery was practised upon me. To be flattered is grateful, even when we know that our praises are not believed by those who pronounce them ; for they prove, at least, our power, and show that our favour is valued, since it is purchased by the meanness of falsehood. But, perhaps, the flatterer is not often detected, for an honest mind is not apt to suspect, and no one exerts the power of discernment with much vigour when self-love favours the deceit.

“ The number of adorers, and the perpetual distraction of my thoughts by new schemes of pleasure, prevented me from listening to any of those who crowd in multitudes to give girls advice, and kept me unmarried and unengaged to my twenty-seventh year, when, as I was towering in all the pride of uncontested excellency, with a face yet little impaired, and a mind hourly improving, the failure of a fund, in which my money was placed, reduced me to a frugal competency, which allowed little beyond neatness and independence.

“ I bore the diminution of my riches without any outrages of sorrow or pusillanimity of dejection. Indeed I did not know how much I had lost, for, having always heard and thought more of my wit and beauty than of my fortune, it did not suddenly enter my imagination, that Melissa could sink beneath her established rank, while her form and her mind continued the same ; that she could cease to raise ad-

miration but by ceasing to deserve it, or feel any stroke but from the hand of time.

“ It was in my power to have concealed the loss, and to have married, by continuing the same appearance, with all the credit of my original fortune ; but I was not so far sunk in my own esteem, as to submit to the baseness of fraud, or to desire any other recommendation than sense and virtue. I therefore dismissed my equipage, sold those ornaments which were become unsuitable to my new condition, and appeared among those with whom I used to converse with less glitter, but with equal spirit.

“ I found myself received at every visit, with sorrow beyond what is naturally felt for calamities in which we have no part, and was entertained with condolence and consolation, so frequently repeated, that my friends plainly consulted rather their own gratification, than my relief. Some from that time refused my acquaintance, and forbore, without any provocation, to repay my visits ; some visited me, but after a longer interval than usual, and every return was still with more delay ; nor did any of my female acquaintances fail to introduce the mention of my misfortunes, to compare my present and former condition, to tell me how much it must trouble me to want the splendour which I became so well, to look at pleasures which I had formerly enjoyed, and to sink to a level with those by whom I had been considered as moving in a higher sphere, and who had hitherto approached me with reverence and submission, which I was now no longer to expect.

“ Observations like these are commonly nothing better than covert insults, which serve to give vent to the flatulence of pride, but they are now and then imprudently uttered by honesty and benevolence, and inflict pain where kindness is intended. I will,

therefore, so far maintain my antiquated claim to politeness, as to venture the establishment of this rule, that no one ought to remind another of misfortunes of which the sufferer does not complain, and which there are no means proposed of alleviating. You have no right to excite thoughts which necessarily give pain whenever they return, and which perhaps might not have revived but by absurd and unseasonable compassion.

“ My endless train of lovers immediately withdrew, without raising any emotions. The greater part had indeed always professed to court, as it is termed, upon the square, had inquired my fortune, and offered settlements; these had undoubtedly a right to retire without censure, since they had openly treated for money, as necessary to their happiness, and who can tell how little they wanted any other portion? I have always thought the clamours of women unreasonable, who imagine themselves injured because the men who followed them upon the supposition of a greater fortune, reject them when they are discovered to have less. I have never known any lady, who did not think wealth a title to some stipulations in her favour; and surely what is claimed by the possession of money, is justly forfeited by its loss. She that has once demanded a settlement has allowed the importance of fortune; and when she cannot show pecuniary merit, why should she think her cheapener obliged to purchase?

“ My lovers were not all contented with silent desertion. Some of them revenged the neglect which they had formerly endured by wanton and superfluous insults, and endeavoured to mortify me, by paying, in my presence, those civilities to other ladies, which were once devoted only to me. But as it had been my rule to treat men according to the *rank of their intellect*, I had never suffered any one

to waste his life in suspense, who could have employed it to better purpose, and had therefore no enemies but coxcombs, whose resentment and respect were equally below my consideration.

“ The only pain which I have felt from degradation, is the loss of that influence which I had always exerted on the side of virtue, in the defence of innocence, and the assertion of truth. I now find my opinions slighted, my sentiments criticised, and my arguments opposed by those that used to listen to me without reply, and struggle to be first in expressing their conviction.

“ The female disputants have wholly thrown off my authority ; and if I endeavour to enforce my reasons by an appeal to the scholars that happen to be present, the wretches are certain to pay their court by sacrificing me and my system to a finer gown, and I am every hour insulted with contradiction by cowards, who could never find till lately that Melissa was liable to error.

“ There are two persons only whom I cannot charge with having changed their conduct with my change of fortune. One is an old curate that has passed his life in the duties of his profession, with great reputation for his knowledge and piety ; the other is a lieutenant of dragoons. The parson made no difficulty in the height of my elevation to check me when I was pert, and instruct me when I blundered ; and if there is any alteration, he is now more timorous lest his freedom should be thought rudeness. The soldier never paid me any particular addresses, but very rigidly observed all the rules of politeness, which he is now so far from relaxing, that whenever he serves the tea, he obstinately carries me the first dish, in defiance of the frowns and whispers of the table.

“ *This, Mr. Rambler, is to see the world. It is im-*

possible for those that have only known affluence and prosperity, to judge rightly of themselves or others. The rich and the powerful live in a perpetual masquerade, in which all about them wear borrowed characters ; and we only discover in what estimation we are held, when we can no longer give hopes or fears.

“ I am, &c.

“ MELISSA.”

No. 76. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1750.

—*Silvis, ubi passim*

*Palantes error certo de tramite pellit,  
Ille sinistrorsùm, hic dextrorsùm abiit ; unus utrique  
Error, sed variis illudit partibus.—*

HOR. SAT. ii. 3. 46.

While mazy error draws mankind astray  
From truth's sure path, each takes his devious way ;  
One to the right, one to the left recedes,  
Alike deluded, as each fancy leads.

ELPHINSTON.

It is easy for every man, whatever be his character with others, to find reasons for esteeming himself, and therefore censure, contempt, or conviction of crimes, seldom deprive him of his own favour. Those, indeed, who can see only external facts, may look upon him with abhorrence, but when he calls himself to his own tribunal he finds every fault, if not absolutely effaced, yet so much palliated by the goodness of his intention, and the cogency of the motive, that very little guilt or turpitude remains ; and when he takes a survey of the whole complication of his

character, he discovers so many latent excellencies, so many virtues that want but an opportunity to exert themselves in act, and so many kind wishes for universal happiness, that he looks on himself as suffering unjustly under the infamy of single failings, while the general temper of his mind is unknown or unregarded.

It is natural to mean well, when only abstracted ideas of virtue are proposed to the mind, and no particular passion turns us aside from rectitude ; and so willing is every man to flatter himself, that the difference between approving laws, and obeying them, is frequently forgotten ; he that acknowledges the obligations of morality, and pleases his vanity with enforcing them to others, concludes himself zealous in the cause of virtue, though he has no longer any regard to her precepts, than they conform to his own desires ; and counts himself among her warmest lovers, because he praises her beauty, though every rival steals away his heart.

There are, however, great numbers who have little recourse to the refinements of speculation, but who yet live at peace with themselves, by means which require less understanding, or less attention. When their hearts are burthened with the consciousness of a crime, instead of seeking for some remedy within themselves, they look round upon the rest of mankind, to find others tainted with the same guilt : they please themselves with observing, that they have numbers on their side ; and that though they are hunted out from the society of good men, they are not likely to be condemned to solitude.

It may be observed, perhaps without exception, that none are so industrious to detect wickedness, or so ready to impute it, as they whose crimes are *apparent and confessed*. They envy an unblemished *reputation*, and what they envy they are busy to de-

stroy: they are unwilling to suppose themselves meaner and more corrupt than others, and therefore willingly pull down from their elevations those with whom they cannot rise to an equality. No man yet was ever wicked without secret discontent, and according to the different degrees of remaining virtue or unextinguished reason, he either endeavours to reform himself, or corrupt others; either to regain the station which he has quitted, or prevail on others to imitate his defection.

It has been always considered as an alleviation of misery not to suffer alone, even when union and society can contribute nothing to resistance or escape; some comfort of the same kind seems to incite wickedness to seek associates, though indeed another reason may be given, for as guilt is propagated the power of reproach is diminished, and among numbers equally detestable, every individual may be sheltered from shame, though not from conscience.

Another lenitive by which the throbs of the breast are assuaged, is, the contemplation, not of the same, but of different crimes. He that cannot justify himself by his resemblance to others, is ready to try some other expedient, and to inquire what will rise to his advantage from opposition and dissimilitude. He easily finds some faults in every human being, which he weighs against his own, and easily makes them preponderate while he keeps the balance in his own hand, and throws in or takes out, at his pleasure, circumstances that make them heavier or lighter. He then triumphs in his comparative purity, and sets himself at ease, not because he can refute the charges advanced against him, but because he can censure his accusers with equal justice, and no longer fears the arrows of reproach, when he has stored his magazine of malice with weapons equally sharp and equally *envenomed*.



This practice, though never just, is yet specious and artful, when the censure is directed against deviations to the contrary extreme. The man who is branded with cowardice may, with some appearance of propriety, turn all his force of argument against a stupid contempt of life, and rash precipitation into unnecessary danger. Every recession from temerity is an approach towards cowardice, and though it be confessed that bravery, like other virtues, stands between faults on either hand, yet the place of the middle point may always be disputed; he may therefore often impose upon careless understandings, by turning the attention wholly from himself, and keeping it fixed invariably on the opposite fault; and, by showing how many evils are avoided by his behaviour, he may conceal for a time those which are incurred.

But vice has not always opportunities or address for such artful subterfuges; men often extenuate their own guilt, only by vague and general charges upon others, or endeavour to gain rest to themselves, by pointing some other prey to the pursuit of censure.

Every whisper of infamy is industriously circulated, every hint of suspicion eagerly improved, and every failure of conduct joyfully published, by those whose interest it is, that the eye and voice of the public should be employed on any rather than on themselves.

All these artifices, and a thousand others equally vain and equally despicable, are incited by that conviction of the deformity of wickedness, from which none can set himself free, and by an absurd desire to separate the cause from the effects, and to enjoy the profit of crimes without suffering the shame. Men are willing to try all methods of reconciling guilt and quiet, and when their understandings are stubborn and uncomplying, raise their passions against them, *and hope to overpower their own knowledge.*

It is generally not so much the desire of men, sunk into depravity, to deceive the world as themselves; for when no particular circumstances make them dependent on others, infamy disturbs them little, but as it revives their remorse, and is echoed to them from their own hearts. The sentence most dreaded is that of reason and conscience, which they would engage on their side at any price but the labours of duty and the sorrows of repentance. For this purpose every seducement and fallacy is sought, the hopes still rest upon some new experiment till life is at an end; and the last hour steals on unperceived, while the faculties are engaged in resisting reason, and repressing the sense of the divine disapprobation.

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No. 77. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1750.

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*Os dignum æterno nitidum quod fulgeat auro,  
Si mallet laudare Deum cui sordida monstra  
Prætulit, et liquidum temeravit crimine vocem.*

PRUDENT.

A golden statue such a wit might claim,  
Had God and virtue raised the noble flame;  
But ah! how lewd a subject has he sung,  
What vile obscenity profanes his tongue.

F. LEWIS.

AMONG those, whose hopes of distinction, or riches, arise from an opinion of their intellectual attainments, it has been, from age to age, an established custom to complain of the ingratitude of mankind to their instructors, and the discouragement which men of genius and study suffer from avarice and ignorance,

from the prevalence of false taste, and the encroachment of barbarity.

Men are most powerfully affected by those evils which themselves feel, or which appear before their own eyes; and as there has never been a time of such general felicity, but that many have failed to obtain the rewards to which they had, in their own judgement, a just claim, some offended writer has always declaimed, in the rage of disappointment, against his age or nation; nor is there one who has not fallen upon times more unfavourable to learning than any former century, or who does not wish, that he had been reserved in the insensibility of non-existence to some happier hour, when literary merit shall no longer be despised, and the gifts and caresses of mankind shall recompense the toils of study, and add lustre to the charms of wit.

Many of these clamours are undoubtedly to be considered only as the bursts of pride never to be satisfied, as the prattle of affectation mimicking distresses unfelt, or as the common places of vanity solicitous for splendour of sentences and acuteness of remark. Yet it cannot be denied that frequent discontent must proceed from frequent hardships; and though it is evident, that not more than one age or people can deserve the censure of being more averse from learning than any other, yet at all times knowledge must have encountered impediments, and wit been mortified with contempt, or harassed with persecution.

It is not necessary, however, to join immediately in the outcry, or to condemn mankind as pleased with ignorance, or always envious of superior abilities. The miseries of the learned have been related by themselves, and since they have not been found exempt from that partiality with which men look upon *their own actions and sufferings*, we may conclude

that they have not forgotten to deck their cause with the brightest ornaments and strongest colours. The logician collected all his subtilties when they were to be employed in his own defence ; and the master of rhetoric exerted against his adversary all the arts by which hatred is imbittered and indignation inflamed.

To believe no man in his own cause, is the standing and perpetual rule of distributive justice. Since, therefore, in the controversy between the learned and their enemies, we have only the pleas of one party, of the party more able to delude our understandings, and engage our passions, we must determine our opinion by facts uncontested, and evidences on each side allowed to be genuine.

By this procedure, I know not whether the students will find their cause promoted, or the compassion which they expect much increased. Let their conduct be impartially surveyed ; let them be allowed no longer to direct attention at their pleasure, by expatiating on their own deserts ; let neither the dignity of knowledge overawe the judgement, nor the graces of elegance seduce it. It will then, perhaps, be found, that they were not able to produce claims to kinder treatment, but provoked the calamities which they suffered, and seldom wanted friends, but when they wanted virtue.

That few men celebrated for theoretic wisdom live with conformity to their precepts, must be readily confessed ; and we cannot wonder that the indignation of mankind rises with great vehemence against those who neglect the duties which they appear to know with so strong conviction the necessity of performing. Yet, since no man has power of acting equal to that of thinking, I know not whether the speculatist may not sometimes incur censures too severe, and by those, who form ideas of his life from

their knowledge of his books, be considered as worse than others, only because he was expected to be better.

He, by whose writings the heart is rectified, the appetites counteracted, and the passions repressed, may be considered as not unprofitable to the great republic of humanity, even though his behaviour should not always exemplify his rules. His instructions may diffuse their influence to regions, in which it will not be inquired whether the author be *albus an ater*, 'good or bad'; to times, when all his faults and all his follies shall be lost in forgetfulness, among things of no concern or importance to the world; and he may kindle in thousands and ten thousands that flame which burnt but dimly in himself, through the fumes of passion or the damps of cowardice. The vicious moralist may be considered as a taper, by which we are lighted through the labyrinth of complicated passions; he extends his radiance further than his heat, and guides all that are within view, but burns only to those who make too near approaches.

Yet since good or harm must be received for the most part from those to whom we are familiarly known, he whose vices overpower his virtues, in the compass to which his vices can extend, has no reason to complain that he meets not with affection or veneration, when those with whom he passes his life are more corrupted by his practice than enlightened by his ideas. Admiration begins where acquaintance ceases; and his favourers are distant, but his enemies at hand.

Yet many have dared to boast of neglected merit, and to challenge their age for cruelty and folly, of whom it cannot be alleged that they have endeavoured to increase the wisdom or virtue of their readers. They have been at once profligate in their lives, and licentious in their compositions; have not only forsaken the paths of virtue, but attempted to lure

others after them. They have smoothed the road of perdition, covered with flowers the thorns of guilt, and taught temptation sweeter notes, softer blandishments, and stronger allurements.

It has been apparently the settled purpose of some writers, whose powers and acquisitions place them high in the ranks of literature, to set fashion on the side of wickedness; to recommend debauchery and lewdness, by associating them with qualities most likely to dazzle the discernment and attract the affections; and to show innocence and goodness with such attendant weaknesses as necessarily expose them to contempt and derision.

Such naturally found intimates among the corrupt, the thoughtless, and the intemperate; passed their lives amidst the levities of sportive idleness, or the warm professions of drunken friendship; and fed their hopes with the promises of wretches, whom their precepts had taught to scoff at truth. But when fools had laughed away their sprightliness, and the languors of excess could no longer be relieved, they saw their protectors hourly drop away, and wondered and stormed to find themselves abandoned. Whether their companions persisted in wickedness or returned to virtue, they were left equally without assistance; for debauchery is selfish and negligent, and from virtue the virtuous only can expect regard.

It is said by Florus of Catiline, who died in the midst of slaughtered enemies, that his death had been illustrious, had it been suffered for his country. Of the wits who have languished away life under the pressures of poverty, or in the restlessness of suspense, caressed and rejected, flattered and despised, as they were of more or less use to those who styled themselves their patrons, it might be observed, that

their miseries would enforce compassion, had they been brought upon them by honesty and religion.

The wickedness of a loose or profane author is more atrocious than that of the giddy libertine or drunken ravisher, not only because it extends its effects wider, as a pestilence that taints the air is more destructive than poison infused in a draught, but because it is committed with cool deliberation. By the instantaneous violence of desire, a good man may sometimes be surprised before reflection can come to his rescue ; when the appetites have strengthened their influence by habit, they are not easily resisted or suppressed ; but for the frigid villany of studious lewdness, for the calm malignity of labour-ed impiety, what apology can be invented ? What punishment can be adequate to the crime of him who retires to solitudes for the refinement of debauchery ; who tortures his fancy, and ransacks his memory, only that he may leave the world less virtuous than he found it ; that he may intercept the hopes of the rising generation ; and spread snares for the soul with more dexterity ?

What were their motives, or what their excuses, is below the dignity of reason to examine. If having extinguished in themselves the distinction of right and wrong, they were insensible of the mischief which they promoted, they deserve to be hunted down by the general compact, as no longer partaking of social nature ; if influenced by the corruption of patrons or readers, they sacrificed their own convictions to vanity or interest, they were to be abhorred with more acrimony than he that murders for pay ; since they committed greater crimes without greater temptations.

‘ Of him to whom much is given, much shall be required.’ Those whom God has favoured with su-

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perior faculties, and made eminent for quickness of intuition and accuracy of distinctions, will certainly be regarded as culpable in His eye, for defects and deviations which, in souls less enlightened, may be guiltless. But surely, none can think without horror on that man's condition, who has been more wicked in proportion as he had more means of excelling in virtue, and used the light imparted from Heaven only to embellish folly, and shed lustre upon crimes.

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NO. 78. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1750.

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— *Mors sola fatetur*

*Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.*—

JUV. SAT. X. 172.

Death only this mysterious truth unfolds,  
The mighty soul how small a body holds.

DRYDEN.

CORPORAL sensation is known to depend so much upon novelty, that custom takes away from many things their power of giving pleasure or pain. Thus a new dress becomes easy by wearing it, and the palate is reconciled by degrees to dishes which at first disgusted it. That by long habit of carrying a burden, we lose, in great part, our sensibility of its weight, any man may be convinced by putting on for an hour the armour of our ancestors; for he will scarcely believe that men would have had much in-



clination to marches and battles, encumbered and oppressed, as he will find himself, with the ancient panoply. Yet the heroes that overran regions, and stormed towns in iron accoutrements, he knows not to have been bigger, and has no reason to imagine them stronger than the present race of men; he, therefore, must conclude, that their peculiar powers were conferred only by peculiar habits, and that their familiarity with the dress of war enabled them to move in it with ease, vigour, and agility.

Yet it seems to be the condition of our present state, that pain should be more fixed and permanent than pleasure. Uneasiness gives way by slow degrees, and is long before it quits its possession of the sensory; but all our gratifications are volatile, vagrant, and easily dissipated. The fragrance of the jessamine bower is lost after the enjoyment of a few moments, and the Indian wanders among his native spices, without any sense of their exhalations. It is, indeed, not necessary to show, by many instances, what all mankind confess, by an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed.

Something similar, or analogous, may be observed in effects produced immediately upon the mind; nothing can strongly strike or affect us, but what is rare or sudden. The most important events, when they become familiar, are no longer considered with wonder or solicitude, and that which at first filled up our whole attention, and left no place for any other thought, is soon thrust aside into some remote repository of the mind, and lies among other lumber of the memory, overlooked and neglected. Thus far the mind resembles the body, but here the similitude is at an end.

The manner in which external force acts upon

the body is very little subject to the regulation of the will ; no man can at pleasure obtund or invigorate his senses, prolong the agency of any impulse, or continue the presence of any image traced upon the eye, or any sound infused into the ear. But our ideas are more subjected to choice ; we can call them before us, and command their stay, we can facilitate and promote their recurrence, we can either repress their intrusion, or hasten their retreat. It is, therefore, the business of wisdom and virtue, to select among numberless objects striving for our notice, such as may enable us to exalt our reason, extend our views, and secure our happiness. But this choice is to be made with very little regard to rareness or frequency ; for nothing is valuable merely because it is either rare or common, but because it is adapted to some useful purpose, and enables us to supply some deficiency of our nature.

Milton has judiciously represented the father of mankind as seized with horror and astonishment at the sight of death, exhibited to him on the mount of vision. For surely nothing can so much disturb the passions, or perplex the intellects of man, as the disruption of his union with visible nature ; a separation from all that has hitherto delighted or engaged him ; a change not only of the place, but the manner of his being ; an entrance into a state not simply which he knows not, but which perhaps he has not faculties to know ; an immediate and perceptible communication with the Supreme Being, and, what is above all distressful and alarming, the final sentence and unalterable allotment.

Yet we to whom the shortness of life has given frequent occasions of contemplating mortality, can, without emotion, see generations of men pass away, and are at leisure to establish modes of sorrow, and

adjust the ceremonial of death. We can look upon funeral pomp as a common spectacle in which we have no concern, and turn away from it to trifles and amusements, without dejection of look, or inquietude of heart.

It is, indeed, apparent from the constitution of the world, that there must be a time for other thoughts; and a perpetual meditation upon the last hour, however it may become the solitude of a monastery, is inconsistent with many duties of common life. But surely the remembrance of death ought to predominate in our minds, as an habitual and settled principle, always operating, though not always perceived; and our attention should seldom wander so far from our own condition, as not to be recalled and fixed by sight of an event, which must soon, we know not how soon, happen likewise to ourselves, and of which, though we cannot appoint the time, we may secure the consequence.

Every instance of death may justly awaken our fears and quicken our vigilance, but its frequency so much weakens its effect, that we are seldom alarmed unless some close connexion is broken, some scheme frustrated, or some hope defeated. Many, therefore, seem to pass on from youth to decrepitude without any reflection on the end of life, because they are wholly involved within themselves, and look on others only as inhabitants of the common earth, without any expectation of receiving good, or intention of bestowing it.

Events, of which we confess the importance, excite little sensibility, unless they affect us more nearly than as sharers in the common interest of mankind; that desire which every man feels of being remembered and lamented, is often mortified when we remark how little concern is caused by the eternal

departure even of those who have passed their lives with public honours, and been distinguished by extraordinary performances. It is not possible to be regarded with tenderness except by a few. That merit which gives greatness and renown, diffuses its influence to a wide compass, but acts weakly on every single breast; it is placed at a distance from common spectators, and shines like one of the remote stars, of which the light reaches us, but not the heat. The wit, the hero, the philosopher, whom their tempers or their fortunes have hindered from intimate relations, die, without any other effect than that of adding a new topic to the conversation of the day. They impress none with any fresh conviction of the fragility of our nature, because none had any particular interest in their lives, or was united to them by a reciprocation of benefits and endearments.

Thus it often happens, that those who in their lives were applauded and admired, are laid at last in the ground without the common honour of a stone; because by those excellencies with which many were delighted, none had been obliged, and, though they had many to celebrate, they had none to love them.

Custom so far regulates the sentiments, at least of common minds, that I believe men may be generally observed to grow less tender as they advance in age. He who, when life was new, melted at the loss of every companion, can look in time without concern, upon the grave into which his last friend was thrown, and into which himself is ready to fall; not that he is more willing to die than formerly, but that he is more familiar to the death of others, and therefore, is not alarmed so far as to consider how much nearer he approaches to his end. But this is to submit tamely to the tyranny of accident, and to suffer our

reason to lie useless. Every funeral may justly be considered as a summons to prepare for that state, into which it shows us that we must some time enter ; and the summons is more loud and piercing, as the event of which it warns us is at less distance. To neglect at any time preparation for death, is to sleep on our post at a siege ; but to omit it in old age, is to sleep at an attack.

It has always appeared to me as one of the most striking passages in the visions of Quevedo, which stigmatises those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. ‘ How,’ says he, ‘ can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain ?’

Since business and gaiety are always drawing our attention away from a future state, some admonition is frequently necessary to recall it to our minds, and what can more properly renew the impression than the examples of mortality which every day supplies ? The great incentive to virtue is the reflection that we must die ; it will, therefore, be useful to accustom ourselves, whenever we see a funeral, to consider how soon we may be added to the number of those whose probation is past, and whose happiness or misery shall endure for ever.

## No. 79. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1750.

*Tam sæpe nostrum decipi Fabullum, quid  
Miraris, Aule? Semper bonus homo tiro est.*

MART. XP. xii. 51.

You wonder I've so little wit,  
Friend John, so often to be bit,—  
None better guard against a cheat,  
Than he who is a knave complete.

F. LEWIS.

SUSPICION, however necessary it may be to our safe passage through ways beset on all sides by fraud and malice, has been always considered, when it exceeds the common measures, as a token of depravity and corruption; and a Greek writer of sentences has laid down as a standing maxim, that 'he who believes not another on his oath, knows himself to be perjured.'

We can form our opinions of that which we know not, only by placing it in comparison with something that we know: whoever, therefore, is overrun with suspicion, and detects artifice and stratagem in every proposal, must either have learned by experience or observation the wickedness of mankind, and been taught to avoid fraud by having often suffered or seen treachery, or he must derive his judgement from the consciousness of his own disposition, and impute to others the same inclinations which he feels predominant in himself.

To learn caution by turning our eyes upon life,

and observing the arts by which negligence is surprised, timidity overborne, and credulity amused, requires either great latitude of converse and long acquaintance with business, or uncommon activity of vigilance, and acuteness of penetration. When, therefore, a young man, not distinguished by vigour of intellect, comes into the world full of scruples and diffidence; makes a bargain with many provisional limitations; hesitates in his answer to a common question, lest more should be intended than he can immediately discover; has a long reach in detecting the projects of his acquaintance; considers every caress as an act of hypocrisy, and feels neither gratitude nor affection from the tenderness of his friends, because he believes no one to have any real tenderness but for himself; whatever expectations this early sagacity may raise of his future eminence or riches, I can seldom forbear to consider him as a wretch incapable of generosity or benevolence, as a villain early completed beyond the need of common opportunities and gradual temptations.

Upon men of this class, instruction and admonition are generally thrown away, because they consider artifice and deceit as proofs of understanding; they are misled at the same time by the two great seducers of the world, vanity and interest, and not only look upon those who act with openness and confidence, as condemned by their principles to obscurity and want, but as contemptible for narrowness of comprehension, shortness of views, and slowness of contrivance.

The world has been long amused with the mention of policy in public transactions, and of art in private affairs; they have been considered as the effects of great qualities, and as unattainable by men of the common level: yet I have not found many

performances either of art or policy, that required such stupendous efforts of intellect, or might not have been effected by falsehood and impudence, without the assistance of any other powers. To profess what he does not mean, to promise what he cannot perform, to flatter ambition with prospects of promotion, and misery with hopes of relief, to sooth pride with appearances of submission, and appease enmity by blandishments and bribes, can surely imply nothing more or greater than a mind devoted wholly to its own purposes, a face that cannot blush, and a heart that cannot feel.

These practices are so mean and base, that he who finds in himself no tendency to use them, cannot easily believe that they are considered by others with less detestation; he, therefore, suffers himself to slumber in false security, and becomes a prey to those who applaud their own subtilty, because they know how to steal upon his sleep, and exult in the success which they could never have obtained, had they not attempted a man better than themselves, who was hindered from obviating their stratagems, not by folly, but by innocence.

Suspicion is, indeed, a temper so uneasy and restless, that it is very justly appointed the concomitant of guilt. It is said, that no torture is equal to the inhibition of sleep long continued; a pain to which the state of that man bears a very exact analogy, who dares never give rest to his vigilance and circumspection, but considers himself as surrounded by secret foes, and fears to intrust his children, or his friend with the secret that throbs in his breast, and the anxieties that break into his face. To avoid, at this expense, those evils to which easiness and friendship might have exposed him, is surely to buy safety at too dear a rate, and, in the language of the Roman



satirist, to save life, by losing all for which a wise man would live.

When, in the diet of the German empire, as Camerarius relates, the princes were once displaying their felicity, and each boasting the advantages of his own dominions, one, who possessed a country not remarkable for the grandeur of its cities, or the fertility of its soil, rose to speak, and the rest listened between pity and contempt, till he declared, in honour of his territories, that he could travel through them without a guard, and, if he was weary, sleep in safety upon the lap of the first man whom he should meet; a commendation which would have been ill exchanged for the boast of palaces, pastures, or streams.

Suspicion is not less an enemy to virtue than to happiness: he that is already corrupt is naturally suspicious, and he that becomes suspicious will quickly be corrupt. It is too common for us to learn the frauds by which ourselves have suffered; men who are once persuaded that deceit will be employed against them, sometimes think the same arts justified by the necessity of defence. Even they whose virtue is too well established to give way to example, or be shaken by sophistry, must yet feel their love of mankind diminished with their esteem, and grow less zealous for the happiness of those by whom they imagine their own happiness endangered.

Thus we find old age, upon which suspicion has been strongly impressed by long intercourse with the world, inflexible and severe, not easily softened by submission, melted by complaint, or subdued by supplication. Frequent experience of counterfeited miseries and dissembled virtue, in time overcomes that disposition to tenderness and sympathy, which is so powerful in our younger years; and they that hap-

pen to petition the old for compassion or assistance, are doomed to languish without regard, and suffer for the crimes of men who have formerly been found undeserving or ungrateful.

Historians are certainly chargeable with the depravation of mankind, when they relate, without censure, those stratagems of war by which the virtues of an enemy are engaged to his destruction. A ship comes before a port, weather-beaten and shattered, and the crew implore the liberty of repairing their breaches, supplying themselves with necessaries, or burying their dead. The humanity of the inhabitants inclines them to consent, the strangers enter the town with weapons concealed, fall suddenly upon their benefactors, destroy those that make resistance, and become masters of the place ; they return home rich with plunder, and their success is recorded to encourage imitation.

But surely war has its laws, and ought to be conducted with some regard to the universal interest of man. Those may justly be pursued as enemies to the community of nature, who suffer hostility to vacate the unalterable laws of right, and pursue their private advantage by means which, if once established, must destroy kindness, cut off from every man all hopes of assistance from another, and fill the world with perpetual suspicion and implacable malevolence. Whatever is thus gained ought to be restored, and those who have conquered by such treachery, may be justly denied the protection of their native country.

Whoever commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to

invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

No. 80. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1750.

*Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum  
Soracte : nec jam sustineant onus  
Silvæ laborantes.*—

HOR. CAR. l. 9. l.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height,  
Made higher with new mounts of snow;  
Again behold the winter's weight  
Oppress the lab'ring woods below.

DRYDEN.

As Providence has made the human soul an active being, always impatient for novelty, and struggling for something yet unenjoyed with unwearied progression, the world seems to have been eminently adapted to this disposition of the mind; it is formed to raise expectations by constant vicissitudes, and to obviate satiety by perpetual change.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we find something to revive our curiosity and engage our attention. In the dusk of the morning, we watch the rising of the sun, and see the day diversify the clouds, and open new prospects in its gradual advance. After a few hours, we see the shades lengthen and the light decline, till the sky is resigned to a multitude of shin-

ing orbs, different from each other in magnitude and splendour. The earth varies its appearance as we move upon it ; the woods offer their shades, and the fields their harvests ; the hill flatters with an extensive view, and the valley invites with shelter, fragrance, and flowers.

The poets have numbered among the felicities of the golden age, an exemption from the change of seasons, and a perpetuity of spring ; but I am not certain that, in this state of imaginary happiness, they have made sufficient provision for that insatiable demand of new gratifications, which seems particularly to characterize the nature of man. Our sense of delight is in a great measure comparative, and arises at once from the sensations which we feel, and those which we remember : thus ease after torment is pleasure for a time, and we are very agreeably recreated when the body, chilled with the weather, is gradually recovering its natural tepidity ; but the joy ceases when we have forgot the cold ; we must fall below ease again, if we desire to rise above it, and purchase new felicity by voluntary pain. It is, therefore, not unlikely, that, however the fancy may be amused with the description of regions in which no wind is heard but the gentle zephyr, and no scenes are displayed but valleys enamelled with unfading flowers, and woods waving their perennial verdure, we should soon grow weary of uniformity, find our thoughts languish for want of other subjects, call on Heaven for our wonted round of seasons, and think ourselves liberally recompensed for the inconveniences of summer and winter, by new perceptions of the calmness and mildness of the intermediate variations.

Every season has its particular power of striking the mind. The nakedness and asperity of the wintry world always fills the beholder with pensive and pro-

found astonishment ; as the variety of the scene is lessened, its grandeur is increased ; and the mind is swelled at once by the mingled ideas of the present and the past, of the beauties which have vanished from the eyes, and the waste and desolation that are now before them.

It is observed by Milton, that he who neglects to visit the country in spring, and rejects the pleasures that are then in their first bloom and fragrance, is guilty of sullenness against nature. If we allot different duties to different seasons, he may be charged with equal disobedience to the voice of nature, who looks on the bleak hills and leafless woods, without seriousness and awe. Spring is the season of gaiety, and winter of terror ; in spring, the heart of tranquillity dances to the melody of the groves, and the eye of benevolence sparkles at the sight of happiness and plenty : in the winter, compassion melts at universal calamity, and the tear of softness starts at the wailings of hunger, and the cries of the creation in distress.

Few minds have much inclination to indulge heaviness and sorrow, nor do I recommend them beyond the degree necessary to maintain in its full vigour that habitual sympathy and tenderness, which, in a world of so much misery, is necessary to the ready discharge of our most important duties. The winter, therefore, is generally celebrated as the proper season for domestic merriment and gaiety. We are seldom invited by the votaries of pleasure to look abroad for any other purpose, than that we may shrink back with more satisfaction to our coverts, and when we have heard the howl of the tempest, and felt the gripe of the frost, congratulate each other with more gladness upon a close room, an easy chair, a large fire, and a smoking dinner.

Winter brings natural inducements to jollity and conversation. Differences, we know, are never so effectually laid asleep, as by some common calamity : an enemy unites all to whom he threatens danger. The rigour of winter brings generally to the same fire-side those, who, by the opposition of inclinations, or difference of employment, moved in various directions through the other parts of the year ; and when they have met, and find it their mutual interest to remain together, they endear each other by mutual compliances, and often wish for the continuance of the social season, with all its bleakness and all its severities.

To the men of study and imagination, the winter is generally the chief time of labour. Gloom and silence produce composure of mind and concentration of ideas ; and the privation of external pleasure naturally causes an effort to find entertainment within. This is the time in which those, whom literature enables to find amusements for themselves, have more than common convictions of their own happiness. When they are condemned by the elements to retirement, and debarred from most of the diversions which are called in to assist the flight of time, they can find new subjects of inquiry, and preserve themselves from that weariness which hangs always flagging upon the vacant mind.

It cannot indeed be expected of all to be poets and philosophers ; it is necessary that the greater part of mankind should be employed in the minute business of common life ; minute indeed, not if we consider its influence upon our happiness, but if we respect the abilities requisite to conduct it. These must necessarily be more dependent on accident for the means of spending agreeably those hours which their occupations leave unengaged, or nature obliges them to allow to relaxation. Yet even on these I

would willingly impress such a sense of the value of time, as may incline them to find out for their careless hours amusements of more use and dignity than the common games, which not only weary the mind without improving it, but strengthen the passions of envy and avarice, and often lead to fraud and to profusion, to corruption and to ruin. It is unworthy of a reasonable being to spend any of the little time allotted us, without some tendency, either direct or oblique, to the end of our existence. And though every moment cannot be laid out on the formal and regular improvement of our knowledge, or in the stated practice of a moral or religious duty, yet none should be so spent as to exclude wisdom or virtue, or pass without possibility of qualifying us more or less for the better employment of those which are to come.

It is scarcely possible to pass an hour in honest conversation, without being able, when we rise from it, to please ourselves with having given or received some advantages; but a man may shuffle cards, or rattle dice, from noon to midnight, without tracing any new idea in his mind, or being able to recollect the day by any other token than his gain or loss, and a confused remembrance of agitated passions and clamorous altercations.

However, as experience is of more weight than precept, any of my readers, who are contriving how to spend the dreary months before them, may consider which of their past amusements fills them now with the greatest satisfaction, and resolve to repeat those gratifications of which the pleasure is most durable.

No. 81. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1750.

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*Discite Justitiam moniti.—*

VIRG. ÆN. vi. 620.

Hear, and be just.—

AMONG questions which have been discussed without any approach to decision, may be numbered the precedency or superior excellence of one virtue to another, which has long furnished a subject of dispute to men whose leisure sent them out into the intellectual world in search of employment, and who have, perhaps, been sometimes withheld from the practice of their favourite duty, by zeal for its advancement and diligence in its celebration.

The intricacy of this dispute may be alleged as a proof of that tenderness for mankind which Providence has, I think, universally displayed, by making attainments easy in proportion as they are necessary. That all the duties of morality ought to be practised, is without difficulty discoverable, because ignorance or uncertainty would immediately involve the world in confusion and distress ; but which duty ought to be most esteemed, we may continue to debate, without inconvenience, so all be diligently performed as there is opportunity or need : for upon practice, not upon opinion, depends the happiness of mankind ; and controversies merely speculative are of small importance in themselves, however they may have sometimes heated a disputant, or provoked a faction.

Of the divine Author of our religion, it is impossible to peruse the evangelical histories, without ob-



serving how little he favoured the vanity of inquisitiveness; how much more rarely he condescended to satisfy curiosity, than to relieve distress; and how much he desired that his followers should rather excel in goodness than in knowledge. His precepts tend immediately to the rectification of the moral principles, and the direction of daily conduct, without ostentation, without art, at once irrefragable and plain, such as well-meaning simplicity may readily conceive, and of which we cannot mistake the meaning, but when we are afraid to find it.

The measure of justice prescribed to us in our transactions with others, is remarkably clear and comprehensive: 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them.' A law by which every claim of right may be immediately adjusted, as far as the private conscience requires to be informed; a law of which every man may find the exposition in his own breast, and which may always be observed without any other qualifications than honesty of intention and purity of will.

Over this law, indeed, some sons of sophistry have been subtle enough to throw mists, which have darkened their own eyes. To perplex this universal principle, they have inquired whether a man, conscious to himself of unreasonable wishes, be bound to gratify them in another. But surely there needed no long deliberation to conclude, that the desires, which are to be considered by us as the measure of right, must be such as we approve, and that we ought to pay no regard to those expectations in others which we condemn in ourselves, and which, however they may intrude upon our imagination, we know it our duty to resist and suppress.

One of the most celebrated cases which have been produced as requiring some skill in the direction of *conscience* to adapt them to this great rule, is that

of a criminal asking mercy of his judge, who cannot but know, that if he was in the state of the supplicant, he should desire that pardon which he now denies. The difficulty of this sophism will vanish, if we remember that the parties are, in reality, on one side the criminal, and on the other the community, of which the magistrate is only the minister, and by which he is intrusted with the public safety. The magistrate, therefore, in pardoning a man unworthy of pardon, betrays the trust with which he is invested, gives away what is not his own, and, apparently, does to others what he would not that others would do to him. Even the community, whose right is still greater to arbitrary grants of mercy, is bound by those laws which regard the great republic of mankind, and cannot justify such forbearance as may promote wickedness, and lessen the general confidence and security in which all have an equal interest, and which all are therefore bound to maintain. For this reason, the state has not a right to erect a general sanctuary for fugitives, or give protection to such as have forfeited their lives by crimes against the laws of common morality, equally acknowledged by all nations, because no people can, without infraction of the universal league of social beings, incite, by prospects of impunity and safety, those practices in another dominion, which they would themselves punish in their own.

One occasion of uncertainty and hesitation, in those by whom this great rule has been commented and dilated, is the confusion of what the exacter casuists are careful to distinguish, debts of justice, and debts of charity. The immediate and primary intention of this precept, is to establish a rule of justice, and I know not whether invention or sophistry can start a single difficulty to retard its application *when it is thus expressed and explained, Let every*

man allow the claim of right in another, which he should think himself entitled to make in the like circumstances.

The discharge of the debts of charity, or duties which we owe to others, not merely as required by justice, but as dictated by benevolence, admits in its own nature greater complication of circumstances and greater latitude of choice. Justice is indispensably and universally necessary, and what is necessary must always be limited, uniform, and distinct. But beneficence, though in general equally enjoined by our religion, and equally needful to the conciliation of the divine favour, is yet, for the most part, with regard to its single acts, elective and voluntary. We may certainly, without injury to our fellow-beings, allow in the distribution of kindness something to our affections, and change the measure of our liberality according to our opinions and prospects, our hopes and fears. This rule, therefore, is not equally determinate and absolute with respect to offices of kindness and acts of liberality, because liberality and kindness, absolutely determined, would lose their nature; for how could we be called tender, or charitable, for giving that which we are positively forbidden to withhold?

Yet even in adjusting the extent of our beneficence, no other measure can be taken than this precept affords us, for we can only know what others suffer or want, by considering how we should be affected in the same state; nor can we proportion our assistance by any other rule than that of doing what we should then expect from others. It indeed generally happens that the giver and receiver differ in their opinions of generosity; the same partiality to his own interest inclines one to large expectations, and the other to sparing distributions. Perhaps the *infirmity of human nature* will scarcely suffer a man,

groaning under the pressure of distress, to judge rightly of the kindness of his friends, or think they have done enough, till his deliverance is completed ; not, therefore, what we might wish, but what we could demand from others, we are obliged to grant, since, though we can easily know how much we might claim, it is impossible to determine what we should hope.

But in all inquiries concerning the practice of voluntary and occasional virtues, it is safest for minds not oppressed with superstitious fears to determine against their own inclinations, and secure themselves from deficiency, by doing more than they believe strictly necessary. For of this every man may be certain, that if he were to exchange conditions with his dependant, he should expect more than, with the utmost exertion of his ardour, he now will prevail upon himself to perform ; and when reason has no settled rule, and our passions are striving to mislead us, it is surely the part of a wise man to err on the side of safety.

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No. 82. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1750.

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*Omnia Castor emis, sic fiet ut omnia vendas.*

MART. EP. vii. 97.

Who buys without discretion, buys to sell.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ IT will not be necessary to solicit your good-will by any formal preface, when I have informed you,

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that I have long been known as the most laborious and zealous virtuoso that the present age has had the honour of producing, and that inconveniences have been brought upon me by an unextinguishable ardour of curiosity, and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the productions of art and nature.

“ It was observed, from my entrance into the world, that I had something uncommon in my disposition, and that there appeared in me very early tokens of superior genius. I was always an enemy to trifles ; the playthings which my mother bestowed upon me I immediately broke, that I might discover the method of their structure, and the causes of their motions ; of all the toys with which children are delighted I valued only my coral, and as soon as I could speak, asked, like Pieresc, innumerable questions which the maids about me could not resolve. As I grew older I was more thoughtful and serious, and, instead of amusing myself with puerile diversions, made collections of natural rarities, and never walked into the fields without bringing home stones of remarkable forms, or insects of some uncommon species. I never entered an old house, from which I did not take away the painted glass, and often lamented that I was not one of that happy generation who demolished the convents and monasteries, and broke windows by law.

“ Being thus early possessed by a taste for solid knowledge, I passed my youth with very little disturbance from passions and appetites, and having no pleasure in the company of boys and girls, who talked of plays, politics, fashions, or love, I carried on my inquiries with incessant diligence, and had amassed more stones, mosses, and shells, than are to be found in many celebrated collections, at an age in which the greatest part of young men are studying *under tutors*, or endeavouring to recommend them-

selves to notice by their dress, their air, and their levities.

“ When I was two and twenty years old, I became, by the death of my father, possessed of a small estate in land, with a very large sum of money in the public funds, and must confess that I did not much lament him, for he was a man of mean parts, bent rather upon growing rich than wise. He once fretted at the expense of only ten shillings, which he happened to overhear me offering for the sting of a hornet, though it was a cold moist summer, in which very few hornets had been seen. He often recommended to me the study of physic, in which, said he, you may at once gratify your curiosity after natural history, and increase your fortune by benefiting mankind. I heard him, Mr. Rambler, with pity, and, as there was no prospect of elevating a mind formed to grovel, suffered him to please himself with hoping that I should some time follow his advice. For you know that there are men, with whom, when they have once settled a notion in their heads, it is to very little purpose to dispute.

“ Being now left wholly to my own inclinations, I very soon enlarged the bounds of my curiosity, and contented myself no longer with such rarities as required only judgement and industry, and when once found, might be had for nothing. I now turned my thoughts to Exotics and Antiques, and became so well known for my generous patronage of ingenious men, that my levee was crowded with visitants, some to see my museum, and others to increase its treasures, by selling me whatever they had brought from other countries.

“ I had always a contempt for that narrowness of conception, which contents itself with cultivating some single corner of the field of science ; I took the *whole region into my view*, and wished it of yet

greater extent. But no man's power can be equal to his will. I was forced to proceed by slow degrees, and to purchase what chance or kindness happened to present. I did not, however, proceed without some design, or imitate the indiscretion of those, who begin a thousand collections, and finish none. Having been always a lover of geography, I determined to collect the maps drawn in the rude and barbarous times, before any regular surveys or just observations; and have, at a great expense, brought together a volume, in which, perhaps, not a single country is laid down, according to its true situation, and by which, he that desires to know the errors of the ancient geographers may be amply informed.

“But my ruling passion is patriotism: my chief care has been to procure the products of our own country; and as Alfred received the tribute of the Welch in wolves' heads, I allowed my tenants to pay their rents in butterflies, till I had exhausted the papilionaceous tribe. I then directed them to the pursuit of other animals, and obtained, by this easy method, most of the grubs and insects which land, air, or water, can supply. I have three species of earthworms not known to the naturalists, have discovered a new ephemera, and can show four wasps that were taken torpid in their winter quarters. I have, from my own ground, the longest blade of grass upon record, and once accepted, as a half-year's rent for a field of wheat, an ear containing more grains than had been seen before upon a single stem.

“One of my tenants so much neglected his own interest, as to supply me, in a whole summer, with only two horse-flies, and those of little more than the common size; and I was upon the brink of seizing for arrears, when his good fortune threw a white mole in his way, for which he was not only forgiven, but *rewarded*.

“ These, however, were petty acquisitions, and made at a small expense ; nor should I have ventured to rank myself among the virtuosi without better claims. I have suffered nothing worthy the regard of a wise man to escape my notice : I have ransacked the old and the new world, and been equally attentive to past ages and the present. For the illustration of ancient history, I can show a marble, of which the inscription, though it is not now legible, appears, from some broken remains of the letters, to have been Tuscan, and therefore probably engraved before the foundation of Rome. I have two pieces of porphyry found among the ruins of Ephesus, and three letters broken off by a learned traveller from the monuments of Persepolis ; a piece of stone which paved the Areopagus of Athens, and a plate without figures or characters, which was found at Corinth, and which I therefore believe to be that metal which was once valued before gold. I have sand gathered out of the Granicus ; a fragment of Trajan’s bridge over the Danube ; some of the mortar which cemented the water-course of Tarquin ; a horse-shoe broken on the Flaminian way ; and a turf with five daisies dug from the field of Pharsalia.

“ I do not wish to raise the envy of unsuccessful collectors, by too pompous a display of my scientific wealth, but cannot forbear to observe, that there are few regions of the globe which are not honoured with some memorial in my cabinets. The Persian monarchs are said to have boasted the greatness of their empire, by being served at their tables with drink from the Ganges and the Danube. I can show one vial, of which the water was formerly an icicle on the crags of Caucasus, and another that contains what once was snow on the top of Atlas ; in a third is dew brushed from a banana in the garden of Is-  
*pahan ; and in another, brine that has rolled in the*



Pacific ocean. I flatter myself that I am writing to a man who will rejoice at the honour which my labours have procured to my country ; and therefore, I shall tell you that Britain can, by my care, boast of a snail that has crawled upon the wall of China ; a humming-bird which an American princess wore in her ear ; the tooth of an elephant who carried the queen of Siam ; the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the great Mogul ; a riband that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana ; and a scymitar once wielded by a soldier of Abas the great.

“ In collecting antiquities of every country, I have been careful to choose only by intrinsic worth, and real usefulness, without regard to party or opinions. I have therefore a lock of Cromwell’s hair in a box turned from a piece of the royal oak ; and keep in the same drawers, sand scraped from the coffin of king Richard, and a commission signed by Henry the Seventh. I have equal veneration for the ruff of Elizabeth and the shoe of Mary of Scotland ; and should lose, with like regret, a tobacco-pipe of Raleigh, and a stirrup of king James. I have paid the same price for a glove of Lewis, and a thimble of queen Mary ; for a fur cap of the Czar, and a boot of Charles of Sweden.

“ You will easily imagine that these accumulations were not made without some diminution of my fortune, for I was so well known to spare no cost, that at every sale some bid against me for hire, some for sport, and some for malice ; and if I asked the price of any thing it was sufficient to double the demand. For curiosity, trafficking thus with avarice, the wealth of India had not been enough ; and I, by little and little, transferred all my money from the funds to my closet : here I was inclined to stop, and live upon my estate in literary leisure, but the sale of the *Harleian collection* shook my resolution : I mortgaged my land,

and purchased thirty medals, which I could never find before. I have at length bought till I can buy no longer, and the cruelty of my creditors has seized my repository ; I am, therefore, condemned to disperse what the labour of an age will not reassemble. I submit to that which cannot be opposed, and shall, in a short time, declare a sale. I have, while it is yet in my power, sent you a pebble, picked up by Tavernier on the banks of the Ganges ; for which I desire no other recompense than that you will recommend my catalogue to the public.

“ QUISQUILIUS.”

No. 83. TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 1751.

*Nisi utile est quod facias, stulta est gloria.*

PHIL.

All useless science is an empty boast.

THE publication of the letter in my last paper has naturally led me to the consideration of that thirst after curiosities, which often draws contempt and ridicule upon itself, but which is perhaps no otherwise blameable, than as it wants those circumstantial recommendations which add lustre even to moral excellencies, and are absolutely necessary to the grace and beauty of indifferent actions.

Learning confers so much superiority on those who possess it, that they might probably have escaped all censure, had they been able to agree among themselves ; but as envy and competition have divided the

republic of letters into factions, they have neglected the common interest ; each has called in foreign aid, and endeavoured to strengthen his own cause by the frown of power, the hiss of ignorance, and the clamour of popularity. They have all engaged in feuds, till by mutual hostilities they demolished those out-works which veneration had raised for their security, and exposed themselves to barbarians, by whom every region of science is equally laid waste.

Between men of different studies and professions, may be observed a constant reciprocation of reproaches. The collector of shells and stones derides the folly of him who pastes leaves and flowers upon paper, pleases himself with colours that are perceptibly fading, and amasses with care what cannot be preserved. The hunter of insects stands amazed that any man can waste his short time upon lifeless matter, while many tribes of animals yet want their history. Every one is inclined not only to promote his own study, but to exclude all others from regard, and having heated his imagination with some favourite pursuit, wonders that the rest of mankind are not seized with the same passion.

There are, indeed, many subjects of study which seem but remotely allied to useful knowledge, and of little importance to happiness or virtue ; nor is it easy to forbear some sallies of merriment, or expressions of pity, when we see a man wrinkled with attention, and emaciated with solicitude, in the investigation of questions, of which, without visible inconvenience, the world may expire in ignorance. Yet it is dangerous to discourage well-intended labours or innocent curiosity ; for he who is employed in searches, which by any deduction of consequences tend to the benefit of life, is surely laudable, in comparison of those who spend their time in counteracting happiness, and filling the world with wrong and

danger, confusion and remorse. No man can perform so little as not to have reason to congratulate himself on his merits, when he beholds the multitudes that live in total idleness, and have never yet endeavoured to be useful.

It is impossible to determine the limits of inquiry, or to foresee what consequences a new discovery may produce. He who suffers not his faculties to lie torpid, has a chance, whatever be his employment, of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The man that first ranged the woods in search of medicinal springs, or climbed the mountains for salutary plants, has undoubtedly merited the gratitude of posterity, how much soever his frequent miscarriages might excite the scorn of his contemporaries. If what appears little be universally despised, nothing greater can be attained, for all that is great was at first little, and rose to its present bulk by gradual accessions and accumulated labours.

Those who lay out time or money in assembling matter for contemplation, are doubtless entitled to some degree of respect, though in a flight of gaiety it be easy to ridicule their treasure, or in a fit of sullenness to despise it. A man who thinks only on the particular object before him, goes not away much illuminated by having enjoyed the privilege of handling the tooth of a shark, or the paw of a white bear; yet there is nothing more worthy of admiration to a philosophical eye, than the structure of animals, by which they are qualified to support life in the elements or climates to which they are appropriated; and of all natural bodies it must be generally confessed, that they exhibit evidences of infinite wisdom, bear their testimony to the supreme reason, and excite in the mind new raptures of gratitude and new incentives to piety.

*To collect the productions of art, and examples of*

mechanical science or manual ability, is unquestionably useful, even when the things themselves are of small importance, because it is always advantageous to know how far the human powers have proceeded, and how much experience has found to be within the reach of diligence. Idleness and timidity often despair without being overcome, and forbear attempts for fear of being defeated; and we may promote the invigoration of faint endeavours, by showing what has been already performed. It may sometimes happen, that the greatest efforts of ingenuity have been exerted in trifles; yet the same principles and expedients may be applied to more valuable purposes, and the movements, which put into action machines of no use but to raise the wonder of ignorance, may be employed to drain fens or manufacture metals, to assist the architect, or preserve the sailor.

For the utensils, arms, or dresses of foreign nations, which make the greatest part of many collections, I have little regard when they are valued only because they are foreign, and can suggest no improvement of our own practice. Yet they are not all equally useless, nor can it be always safely determined which should be rejected or retained: for they may sometimes unexpectedly contribute to the illustration of history, and to the knowledge of the natural commodities of the country, or of the genius and customs of its inhabitants.

Rarities there are of yet a lower rank, which owe their worth merely to accident, and which can convey no information, nor satisfy any rational desire. Such are many fragments of antiquity, as urns and pieces of pavement; and things held in veneration only for having been once the property of some eminent person, as the armour of king Henry; or for having been used on some remarkable occasion, as *the lantern of Guy Fawkes*. The loss or preservation

of these seems to be a thing indifferent, nor can I perceive why the possession of them should be coveted. Yet, perhaps, even this curiosity is implanted by nature ; and when I find Tully confessing of himself that he could not forbear at Athens to visit the walks and houses which the old philosophers had frequented or inhabited, and recollect the reverence which every nation, civil and barbarous, has paid to the ground where merit has been buried, I am afraid to declare against the general voice of mankind, and am inclined to believe, that this regard, which we involuntarily pay to the meanest relic of a man great and illustrious, is intended as an incitement to labour, and an encouragement to expect the same renown, if it be sought by the same virtues.

The virtuoso, therefore, cannot be said to be wholly useless ; but perhaps he may be sometimes culpable for confining himself to business below his genius, and losing in petty speculations, those hours, by which, if he had spent them in nobler studies, he might have given new light to the intellectual world. It is never without grief, that I find a man capable of ratiocination or invention enlisting himself in this secondary class of learning ; for when he has once discovered a method of gratifying his desire of eminence by expense rather than by labour, and known the sweets of a life blest at once with the ease of idleness and the reputation of knowledge, he will not easily be brought to undergo again the toil of thinking, or leave his toys and trinkets for arguments and principles, arguments which require circumspection and vigilance, and principles which cannot be obtained but by the drudgery of meditation. He will gladly shut himself up for ever with his shells and medals, like the companions of Ulysses, who, having tasted the fruit of Lotos, would not, even by the hope

of seeing their own country, be tempted again to the dangers of the sea.

Ἄλλ' αὐτοῦ βούλοντο μετ' ἀνδράσι Λατοφάγους,  
 Λατὸν ἱερπτόμενοι μινίμην, νόστου τι λαλίσθαι. OXYG. L. 96.

—Whoso tastes

Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts;  
 Nor other home nor other care intends,  
 But quits his house, his country, and his friends.

POPE.

Collections of this kind are of use to the learned, as heaps of stone and piles of timber are necessary to the architect. But to dig the quarry or to search the field, requires not much of any quality, beyond stubborn perseverance; and though genius must often lie unactive without this humble assistance, yet this can claim little praise, because every man can afford it.

To mean understandings it is sufficient honour to be numbered amongst the lowest labourers of learning, but different abilities must find different tasks. To hew stone, would have been unworthy of Pallas; and to have rambled in search of shells and flowers had but ill suited with the capacity of Newton.

NO. 84. SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1751.

*Cunarum fueras motor, Charideme, mearum,  
 Et pueri custos, assiduusque comes.  
 Jam mihi nigrescunt tonsa sudaria barba,—  
 Sed tibi non crevi, te noster villicus horret :  
 Te dispensator, te domus ipsa pavet.—*

*Corripis, observas, quæreris, suspiria ducis,  
Et vix a ferulis abstinet ira manum.*

MART. EP. XI. 40.

You rocked my cradle, were my guide  
In youth, still tending at my side :  
But now, dear Sir, my beard is grown,  
Still I'm a child to thee alone.  
Our steward, butler, cook and all  
You fright, nay, e'en the very wall ;  
You pry, and frown, and growl, and chide,  
And scarce will lay the rod aside.

F. LEWIS.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ You seem in all your papers to be an enemy to tyranny, and to look with impartiality upon the world ; I shall therefore lay my case before you, and hope by your decision to be set free from unreasonable restraints, and enabled to justify myself against the accusations which spite and peevishness produce against me.

“ At the age of five years I lost my mother, and my father being not qualified to superintend the education of a girl, committed me to the care of his sister, who instructed me with the authority, and, not to deny her what she may justly claim, with the affection of a parent. She had not very elevated sentiments, or extensive views, but her principles were good, and her intentions pure ; and though some may practise more virtues, scarce any commit fewer faults.

“ Under this good lady I learned all the common rules of decent behaviour, and standing maxims of domestic prudence ; and might have grown up by degrees to a country gentlewoman, without any thoughts of ranging beyond the neighbourhood, had not Flavia come down, last summer, to visit her relations in the next village. I was taken, of course,

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to compliment the stranger, and was, at the first sight, surprised at the unconcern with which she saw herself gazed at by company whom she had never known before ; at the carelessness with which she received compliments, and the readiness with which she returned them. I found she had something which I perceived myself to want, and could not but wish to be like her, at once easy and officious, attentive and unembarrassed. I went home, and for four days could think and talk of nothing but Miss Flavia ; though my aunt told me, that she was a forward flirt, and thought herself wise before her time.

“ In a little time she repaid my visit, and raised in my heart a new confusion of love and admiration. I soon saw her again, and still found new charms in her air, conversation, and behaviour. You who have perhaps seen the world, may have observed, that formality soon ceases between young persons. I know not how others are affected on such occasions, but I found myself irresistibly allured to friendship and intimacy, by the familiar complaisance and airy gaiety of Flavia ; so that in a few weeks I became her favourite, and all the time was passed with me, that she could gain from ceremony and visit.

“ As she came often to me, she necessarily spent some hours with my aunt, to whom she paid great respect, by low courtesies, submissive compliance, and soft acquiescence ; but as I became gradually more accustomed to her manners, I discovered that her civility was general ; that there was a certain degree of deference shown by her to circumstances and appearances ; that many went away flattered by her humility, whom she despised in her heart ; that the influence of far the greatest part of those with whom she conversed, ceased with their presence ; and that sometimes she did not remember the names of them, *whom, without any intentional insincerity or false*

Commendation, her habitual civility had sent away with very high thoughts of their own importance.

“It was not long before I perceived, that my aunt’s opinion was not of much weight in Flavia’s deliberations, and that she was looked upon by her as a woman of narrow sentiments, without knowledge of books, or observations on mankind. I had hitherto considered my aunt, as entitled, by her wisdom and experience, to the highest reverence, and could not forbear to wonder that any one so much younger should venture to suspect her of error or ignorance; but my surprise was without uneasiness, and being now accustomed to think Flavia always in the right, I readily learned from her to trust my own reason, and to believe it possible, that they who had lived longer might be mistaken.

“Flavia had read much, and used so often to converse on subjects of learning, that she put all the men in the country to flight, except the old parson, who declared himself much delighted with her company, because she gave him opportunities to recollect the studies of his younger years, and by some mention of ancient story, had made him rub the dust off his Homer, which had lain unregarded in his closet. With Homer, and a thousand other names familiar to Flavia, I had no acquaintance, but began, by comparing her accomplishments with my own, to repine at my education, and wish that I had not been so long confined to the company of those from whom nothing but housewifery was to be learned. I then set myself to peruse such books as Flavia recommended, and heard her opinion of their beauties and defects. I saw new worlds hourly bursting upon my mind, and was enraptured at the prospect of diversifying life with endless entertainment.

“The old lady finding that a large screen, which I had undertaken to adorn with turkey-work against

winter, made very slow advances, and that I had added in two months but three leaves to a flowered apron then in the frame, took the alarm, and with all the zeal of honest folly exclaimed against my new acquaintance, who had filled me with idle notions, and turned my head with books. But she had now lost her authority, for I began to find innumerable mistakes in her opinions, and improprieties in her language; and therefore thought myself no longer bound to pay much regard to one who knew little beyond her needle and her dairy, and who professed to think that nothing more is required of a woman than to see that the house is clean, and that the maids go to bed and rise at a certain hour.

“She seemed, however, to look upon Flavia as seducing me, and to imagine, that when her influence was withdrawn, I should return to my allegiance; she therefore contented herself with remote hints and gentle admonitions, intermixed with sage histories of the miscarriages of wit, and disappointments of pride. But since she has found, that though Flavia is departed, I still persist in my new scheme, she has at length lost her patience, she snatches my book out of my hand, tears my paper if she finds me writing, burns Flavia’s letters before my face, when she can seize them, and threatens to lock me up, and to complain to my father of my perverseness. If women, she says, would but know their duty and their interest, they would be careful to acquaint themselves with family affairs, and many a penny might be saved; for while the mistress of the house is scribbling and reading, servants are junketing, and linen is wearing out. She then takes me round the rooms, shows me the worked hangings, and chairs of tent-stitch, and asks whether all this was done with a pen and a book.

“*I cannot deny that I sometimes laugh and some-*

times am sullen ; but she has not delicacy enough to be much moved either with my mirth or my gloom, if she did not think the interest of the family endangered by this change of my manners. She had for some years marked out young Mr. Surly, an heir in the neighbourhood, remarkable for his love of fighting-cocks, as an advantageous match ; and was extremely pleased with the civilities which he used to pay me, till under Flavia's tuition I learned to talk of subjects which he could not understand. This, she says, is the consequence of female study ; girls grow too wise to be advised, and too stubborn to be commanded ; but she is resolved to try who shall govern, and will thwart my humour till she breaks my spirit.

" These menaces, Mr. Rambler, sometimes make me quite angry ; for I have been sixteen these ten weeks, and think myself exempted from the dominion of a governess, who has no pretensions to more sense or knowledge than myself. I am resolved, since I am as tall and as wise as other women, to be no longer treated like a girl. Miss Flavia has often told me, that ladies of my age go to assemblies and routs, without their mothers and their aunts ; I shall therefore, from this time, leave asking advice, and refuse to give accounts. I wish you would state the time at which young ladies may judge for themselves, which I am sure you cannot but think ought to begin before sixteen ; if you are inclined to delay it longer, I shall have very little regard to your opinion.

" My aunt often tells me of the advantages of experience, and of the deference due to seniority ; and both she, and all the antiquated part of the world, talk of the unreserved obedience which they paid to the commands of their parents, and the undoubting *confidence with which they listened to their precepts* ;

of the terrors which they felt at a frown, and the humility with which they supplicated forgiveness whenever they had offended. I cannot but fancy that this boast is too general to be true, and that the young and the old were always at variance. I have, however, told my aunt, that I will mend whatever she will prove to be wrong; but she replies that she has reasons of her own, and that she is sorry to live in an age when girls have the impudence to ask for proofs.

“ I beg once again, Mr. Rambler, to know whether I am not as wise as my aunt, and whether, when she presumes to check me as a baby, I may not pluck up a spirit and return her insolence. I shall not proceed to extremities without your advice, which is therefore impatiently expected by

“ MYRTYLLA.

“ P. S. Remember I am past sixteen.”

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No. 85. TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1751.

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*Otia si tollas, periere Cupidinis arcus :  
Contemptæque jacent, et sine luce, faces.*

OVID.

At busy hearts in vain Love's arrows fly ;  
Dim, scorn'd, and impotent, his torches lie.

MANY writers of eminence in physic have laid out their diligence upon the consideration of those distempers to which men are exposed by particular states of life, and very learned treatises have been produced upon the maladies of the camp, the sea, and the mines.

There are, indeed, few employments which a man accustomed to anatomical inquiries and medical refinements would not find reasons for declining as dangerous to health, did not his learning or experience inform him, that almost every occupation, however inconvenient or formidable, is happier and safer than a life of sloth.

The necessity of action is not only demonstrable from the fabric of the body, but evident from observation of the universal practice of mankind, who for the preservation of health, in those whose rank or wealth exempts them from the necessity of lucrative labour, have invented sports and diversions, though not of equal use to the world with manual trades, yet of equal fatigue to those who practise them, and differing only from the drudgery of the husbandman or manufacturer, as they are acts of choice, and therefore performed without the painful sense of compulsion. The huntsman rises early, pursues his game through all the dangers and obstructions of the chase, swims rivers, and scales precipices, till he returns home no less harassed than the soldier, and has perhaps sometimes incurred as great hazard of wounds or death: yet he has no motive to incite his ardour; he is neither subject to the commands of a general, nor dreads any penalties for neglect and disobedience; he has neither profit nor honour to expect from his perils and his conquests, but toils without the hope of mural or civic garlands, and must content himself with the praise of his tenants and companions.

But such is the constitution of man, that labour may be styled its own reward; nor will any external incitements be requisite, if it be considered how much happiness is gained, and how much misery escaped, by frequent and violent agitation of the body.

Ease is the utmost that can be hoped from a sedentary and unactive habit; ease, a neutral state

between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprise, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content ; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain ; and whatever hope the dreams of speculation may suggest of observing the proportion between nutriment and labour, and keeping the body in a healthy state by supplies exactly equal to its waste, we know that, in effect, the vital powers unexcited by motion, grow gradually languid ; that as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated ; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures ; and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death.

Exercise cannot secure us from that dissolution to which we are decreed ; but while the soul and body continue united, it can make the association pleasing, and give probable hopes that they shall be disjoined by an easy separation. It was a principle among the ancients, that acute diseases are from Heaven, and chronical from ourselves ; the dart of death, indeed, falls from Heaven, but we poison it by our own misconduct ; to die is the fate of man, but to die with lingering anguish is generally his folly.

It is necessary to that perfection of which our present state is capable, that the mind and body should both be kept in action ; that neither the faculties of

the one nor of the other be suffered to grow lax or torpid for want of use; that neither health be purchased by voluntary submission to ignorance, nor knowledge cultivated at the expense of that health, which must enable it either to give pleasure to its possessor, or assistance to others. It is too frequently the pride of students to depise those amusements and recreations, which give to the rest of mankind strength of limbs and cheerfulness of heart. Solitude and contemplation are indeed seldom consistent with such skill in common exercises or sports as is necessary to make them practised with delight, and no man is willing to do that of which the necessity is not pressing and immediate, when he knows that his awkwardness must make him ridiculous.

*Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis;  
Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive, quiescit;  
Ne spissæ risum tollant impunè Coronæ.*

HOR. ARS POET. 379.

He that's unskilful will not toss a ball,  
Nor run, nor wrestle, for he fears the fall;  
He justly fears to meet deserved disgrace,  
And that the ring will hiss the baffled ass.

CREECH.

Thus the man of learning is often resigned, almost by his own consent, to languor and pain; and while in the prosecution of his studies he suffers the weariness of labour, is subject by his course of life to the maladies of idleness.

It was, perhaps, from the observation of this mischievous omission in those who are employed about intellectual objects, that Locke has, in his System of Education, urged the necessity of a trade to men of all ranks and professions, that when the mind is



weary with its proper task, it may be relaxed by a slighter attention to some mechanical operation ; and that while the vital functions are resuscitated and awakened by vigorous motion, the understanding may be restrained from that vagrance and dissipation by which it relieves itself after a long intense-ness of thought, unless some allurements be presented that may engage application without anxiety.

There is so little reason for expecting frequent conformity to Locke's precept, that it is not necessary to inquire whether the practice of mechanical arts might not give occasion to petty emulation, and degenerate ambition ; and whether, if our divines and physicians were taught the lathe and the chisel, they would not think more of their tools than their books ; as Nero neglected the care of his empire for his chariot and his fiddle. It is certainly dangerous to be too much pleased with little things ; but what is there which may not be perverted ? Let us remember how much worse employment might have been found for those hours, which a manual occupation appears to engross : let us compute the profit with the loss, and when we reflect how often a genius is allured from his studies, consider likewise that, perhaps, by the same attractions, he is sometimes withheld from debauchery, or recalled from malice, from ambition, from envy, and from lust.

I have always admired the wisdom of those by whom our female education was instituted, for having contrived, that every woman, of whatever condition, should be taught some arts of manufacture, by which the vacuities of recluse and domestic leisure may be filled up. These arts are more necessary, as the weakness of their sex and the general system of life debar ladies from many employments which, by diversifying the circumstances of men, preserve

them from being cankered by the rust of their own thoughts. I know not how much of the virtue and happiness of the world may be the consequence of this judicious regulation. Perhaps the most powerful fancy might be unable to figure the confusion and slaughter that would be produced by so many piercing eyes and vivid understandings, turned loose at once upon mankind, with no other business than to sparkle and intrigue, to perplex and to destroy.

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous insnarers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows, and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector, in the *Iliad*, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terrors, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff.

It is certain that any wild wish or vain imagination never takes such firm possession of the mind, as when it is found empty and unoccupied. The old peripatetic principle, that 'Nature abhors a Vacuum,' may be properly applied to the intellect, which will embrace any thing, however absurd or criminal, rather than be wholly without an object. Perhaps every man may date the predominance of those desires that disturb his life and contaminate his conscience from some unhappy hour when too much leisure exposed him to their incursions; for he has

lived with little observation either on himself or others, who does not know that to be idle is to be vicious.

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No. 86. SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1751.

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*Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus, et aure.*

HOB. ARS POET. 274.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan.

ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burthen of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it, and those passions, by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or, perhaps, to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, 'that he had heard the nightingale herself;' and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon *Paradise Lost*, and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the commonwealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topics of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with how minute attention the ancient critics considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects, of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which

were most barren of ideas, and required labour rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal, but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton, I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall, therefore, studiously decline the dialect of grammarians; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented, but because the language already in use was insufficient. If, therefore, I shall sometimes seem obscure, it may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroic measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

Courage uncertain dangers may abate,  
But who can bear th'approach of certain fate.

DRYDEN.

Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights  
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
Reigns here, and revels : not in the bought smile  
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd.

MILTON.

The accent may be observed in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth in Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should, therefore, be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has, therefore, enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed; this, though it always injures the harmony of the line considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances, and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the music.

Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,  
Both turn'd, and under open sky adored  
The God that made both sky, air, earth and heaven,  
Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe

*And starry pole : Thou also mad'st the night,  
 Maker omnipotent ! and thou the day,  
 Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,  
 Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,  
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss,  
 Ordain'd by thee ; and this delicious place,  
 For us too large ; where thy abundance wants  
 Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground ;  
 But thou hast promised from us two a race  
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.*

P. L. iv. 720.

In this passage it will be at first observed, that all the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to the accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong. As,

*Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,  
 Both turn'd, and under open sky adored  
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n.*

In others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but upon both weak :

— A race  
*To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.*

In the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any displeasing diminution of harmony, as may be observed in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this,

— Thou also madest the night,  
*Maker omnipotent ! and thou the day.*

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the invention, or knowledge of Milton, has more need to allure his audience by musical cadences, should seldom suffer more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious :

— This delicious place,  
For us too large, *where thy* abundance wants  
Partakers, and uncropp'd *falls* to the ground.

P. L. iv. 729.

Here the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth pair in the second verse, have their accents retrograde or inverted ; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where the vicious verse concludes a period ; and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently studious of harmony, has committed the same fault :

— His harmless life  
Does with substantial blessedness abound,  
And the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses it in his sonnet, by committing short and long, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than *ours*, had two kinds of verse, the iambic, consisting



of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroic measure is derived, and the Trochaic, consisting in a like alteration of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

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No. 87. TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1751.

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*Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,  
Nemo adeò ferus est ut non mitescere possit,  
Si modò culturæ patientem commodet aurem.*

HOB. EPIST. i. l. 38.

The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,  
The wretch of sloth, its excellence shall prove;  
Fierceness itself shall hear its rage away,  
When list'ning calmly to th'instructive lay.

FRANCIS:

THAT few things are so liberally bestowed, or squandered with so little effect, as good advice, has been generally observed; and many sage positions have been advanced concerning the reasons of this complaint, and the means of removing it. It is, indeed, an important and noble inquiry, for little would be wanting to the happiness of life, if every man could conform to the right as soon as he was shown it.

*This perverse neglect of the most salutary precepts,*

and stubborn resistance of the most pathetic persuasion, is usually imputed to him by whom the counsel is received, and we often hear it mentioned as a sign of hopeless depravity, that though good advice was given, it has wrought no reformation.

Others, who imagine themselves to have quicker sagacity and deeper penetration, have found out, that the inefficacy of advice is usually the fault of the counsellor, and rules have been laid down, by which this important duty may be successfully performed: we are directed by what tokens to discover the favourable moment at which the heart is disposed for the operation of truth and reason, with what address to administer, and with what vehicles to disguise the cathartics of the soul.

But, notwithstanding this specious expedient, we find the world yet in the same state; advice is still given, but still received with disgust; nor has it appeared that the bitterness of the medicine has been yet abated, or its power increased, by any methods of preparing it.

If we consider the manner in which those who assume the office of directing the conduct of others execute their undertaking, it will not be very wonderful that their labours, however zealous or affectionate, are frequently useless. For what is the advice that is commonly given? A few general maxims, enforced with vehemence, and inculcated with importunity, but failing for want of particular reference and immediate application.

It is not often that any man can have so much knowledge of another as is necessary to make instruction useful. We are sometimes not ourselves conscious of the original motives of our actions, and when we know them, our first care is to hide them from the sight of others, and often from those most *diligently*, whose superiority either of power or un-

derstanding may entitle them to inspect our lives ; it is, therefore, very probable, that he who endeavours the cure of our intellectual maladies, mistakes their cause ; and that his prescriptions avail nothing, because he knows not which of the passions or desires is vitiated.

Advice, as it always gives a temporary appearance of superiority, can never be very grateful, even when it is most necessary or most judicious. But for the same reason every one is eager to instruct his neighbours. To be wise or to be virtuous, is to buy dignity and importance at a high price ; but when nothing is necessary to elevation but detection of the follies or the faults of others, no man is so insensible to the voice of fame as to linger on the ground.

— *Tentanda via est, quâ me quoque possim  
Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.*

VIRG. GEORG. iii. 8.

New ways I must attempt, my groveling name  
To raise aloft, and wing my flight to fame.

DRYDEN.

Vanity is so frequently the apparent motive of advice, that we, for the most part, summon our powers to oppose it without any very accurate inquiry whether it is right. It is sufficient that another is growing great in his own eyes at our expense, and assumes authority over us without our permission ; for many would contentedly suffer the consequences of their own mistakes, rather than the insolence of him who triumphs as their deliverer.

It is, indeed, seldom found that any advantages are enjoyed with that moderation which the uncertainty of all human good so powerfully enforces ; and therefore the adviser may justly suspect, that he has inflamed the opposition which he laments by arrogance and superciliousness. He may suspect, but

needs not hastily to condemn, himself, for he can rarely be certain that the softest language or most humble diffidence would have escaped resentment ; since scarcely any degree of circumspection can prevent or obviate the rage with which the slothful, the impotent, and the unsuccessful, vent their discontent upon those that excel them. Modesty itself, if it is praised, will be envied ; and there are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain.

The number of those whom the love of themselves has thus far corrupted, is perhaps not great ; but there are few so free from vanity, as not to dictate to those who will hear their instructions with a visible sense of their own beneficence ; and few to whom it is not displeasing to receive documents, however tenderly and cautiously delivered, or who are not willing to raise themselves from pupillage, by disputing the propositions of their teacher.

It was the maxim, I think, of Alphonsus of Arragon, that dead counsellors are safest. The grave puts an end to flattery and artifice, and the information that we receive from books is pure from interest, fear, or ambition. Dead counsellors are likewise most instructive ; because they are heard with patience and with reverence. We are not unwilling to believe that man wiser than ourselves, from whose abilities we may receive advantage, without any danger of rivalry or opposition, and who affords us the light of his experience, without hurting our eyes by flashes of insolence.

By the consultation of books, whether of dead or living authors, many temptations to petulance and opposition, which occur in oral conferences, are avoided. *An author cannot obtrude his advice unasked.*

nor can be often suspected of any malignant intention to insult his readers with his knowledge or his wit. Yet so prevalent is the habit of comparing ourselves with others, while they remain within the reach of our passions, that books are seldom read with complete impartiality, but by those from whom the writer is placed at such a distance that his life or death is indifferent.

We see that volumes may be perused, and perused with attention, to little effect ; and that maxims of prudence, or principles of virtue, may be treasured in the memory without influencing the conduct. Of the numbers that pass their lives among books, very few read to be made wiser or better, apply any general reproof of vice to themselves, or try their own manners by axioms of justice. They purpose either to consume those hours for which they can find no other amusement, to gain or preserve that respect which learning has always obtained ; or to gratify their curiosity with knowledge, which, like treasure buried and forgotten, is of no use to others or themselves.

“ The preacher,” says a French author, “ may spend an hour in explaining and enforcing a precept of religion, without feeling any impression from his own performance, because he may have no further design than to fill up his hour.” A student may easily exhaust his life in comparing divines and moralists, without any practical regard to morality or religion ; he may be learning not to live, but to reason ; he may regard only the elegance of style, justness of argument, and accuracy of method ; and may enable himself to criticise with judgement, and dispute with subtilty, while the chief use of his volumes is unthought of, his mind is unaffected, and his life is unreformed.

But, though truth and virtue are thus frequently

defeated by pride, obstinacy, or folly, we are not allowed to desert them ; for whoever can furnish arms which they hitherto have not employed, may enable them to gain some hearts which would have resisted any other method of attack. Every man of genius has some arts of fixing the attention peculiar to himself, by which, honestly exerted, he may benefit mankind ; for the arguments for purity of life fail of their due influence, not because they have been considered and confuted, but because they have been passed over without consideration. To the position of Tully, that if Virtue could be seen, she must be loved, may be added, that if Truth could be heard, she must be obeyed.

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No. 88. SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1751.

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*Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti :  
Audebit, quæcunque parum splendoris habebunt,  
Et sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,  
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,  
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ.*

HOR. EPIST. ii. 2. 110.

But he that hath a curious piece design'd,  
When he begins must take a censor's mind,  
Severe and honest ; and what words appear  
Too light and trivial, or too weak to bear  
The weighty sense, nor worth the reader's care,  
Shake off ; though stubborn, they are loth to move,  
And though we fancy, dearly though we love.

CREECH.

“ THERE is no reputation for genius,” says Quintilian, “ to be gained by writing on things, which,

however necessary, have little splendour or show. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet since there is not any way to the top of science, but from the lowest parts, I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator.'

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent, I shall continue my inquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however minute the employment may appear of analysing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses, it is certain that without this petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passion.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall on its proper place, but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our *monosyllables* being of Teutonic original, or formed

by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

— Every lower faculty  
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

P. L. v. 410.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived by attending to the following passages :—

Immortal *Amarant*—there grows  
And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,  
And where the river of bliss, through midst of heaven  
*Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream ;*  
With these that never fade, the spirits elect  
*Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams.*

*ib.* 858.

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage, may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations :

— Under foot the violet,  
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone  
Of costliest emblem.—

*ib.* iv. 700.

— Here, in close recess,  
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,  
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed ;  
And heav'nly choirs the hymenean sung.

*ib.* iv. 708.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed not only to the music of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most *mellifluous* of all modern poetry, seems fully con-



vinced of the unfitness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore, pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance; for this reason, and I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but music to his poem.

— The richer seat  
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd  
Guiana, whose great city Gerion's sons  
Call El Dorado.—

P. L. x. 408.

The moon—the Tuscan artist views  
At evening, from the top of Fesole,  
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands.—

ib. i. 287.

He has, indeed, been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As,

Knowledge—  
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns  
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

ib. vii. 126.

This licence, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages, ancient and modern, and, therefore, the critics on *Paradise Lost* have, without *much deliberation*, commended Milton for continuing

it. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French ; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e* which our ancestors added to most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton, therefore, seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be censured ; in some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be safely imitated. The abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is strongly sounded, and makes, with its associate consonant, a full and audible syllable.

— What he gives,

Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found

No ingrateful food : and food alike these pure

Intelligential substances require.

P. L. v. 404.

Fruit—Hesperian fables true,

If true, here only, and of delicious taste.

*ib.* iv. 249.

— Evening now approach'd,

For we have also our evening and our morn.

*ib.* v. 627.

— Of guests he makes them slaves,

Inhospitably, and kills their infant males.

*ib.* xii. 167.

And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth

Throughout the fluid mass.—

*ib.* vii. 236.

God made thee of choice his own, and of his own

To serve him.—

*ib.* x. 766.

I believe every reader will agree, that, in all those passages, though not equally in all, the music is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other lines in which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and, therefore, such compliance with the measure may be allowed.

— Nature breeds

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
Abominable, inutterable; and worse  
Than fables yet have feign'd.— *P. L. ii. 624.*

— From the shore

They view'd the vast immensurable abyss. *ib. vii. 210.*

Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire. *ib. ii. 647.*

To none communicable in earth or heaven. *ib. vii. 124.*

Yet even these contractions increase the roughness of a language too rough already; and though in long poems they may be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables.

— Thus it shall befall

Him who to worth in woman over-trusting  
Lets her will rule— *P. L. xi. 1182.*

I also err'd in over-much admiring. *ib. ix. 1178.*

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but though they are not displeasing or dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroic poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epic and tragic measures than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of

the dramatic lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

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No. 89. TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1751.

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*Dulce est desipere in loco.*

HOR. CAR. iv. 12. ult.

Wisdom at proper times is well forgot.

LOCKE, whom there is no reason to suspect of being a favourer of idleness or libertinism, has advanced, that whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigour, must allow some of it to pass in trifles. It is beyond the powers of humanity to spend a whole life in profound study and intense meditation, and the most rigorous exacters of industry and seriousness have appointed hours for relaxation and amusement.

It is certain, that, with or without our consent, many of the few moments allotted us will slide imperceptibly away, and that the mind will break from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions. Severe and connected attention is preserved but for a short time, and when a man shuts himself up in his closet, and bends his thoughts to the discussion of any abstruse question, he will find his faculties continually stealing away to more pleasing entertainments. He often perceives himself transported, he knows not how, to distant tracts of thought, and return to his first object as from a

dream, without knowing when he forsook it, or how long he has been abstracted from it.

It has been observed, that the most studious are not always the most learned. There is, indeed, no great difficulty in discovering that this difference of proficiency may arise from the difference of intellectual powers, of the choice of books, or the convenience of information. But I believe it likewise frequently happens that the most recluse are not the most vigorous prosecutors of study. Many impose upon the world, and many upon themselves, by an appearance of severe and exemplary diligence, when they, in reality, give themselves up to the luxury of fancy, please their minds with regulating the past, or planning out the future ; place themselves at will in varied situations of happiness, and slumber away their days in voluntary visions. In the journey of life, some are left behind, because they are naturally feeble and slow ; some because they miss the way ; and many because they leave it by choice, and, instead of pressing onward with a steady pace, delight themselves with momentary deviations, turn aside to pluck every flower, and repose in every shade.

There is nothing more fatal to a man whose business is to think, than to have learned the art of regaling his mind with those airy gratifications. Other vices or follies are restrained by fear, reformed by admonition, or rejected by the conviction which the comparison of our conduct with that of others, may in time produce. But this invisible riot of the mind, this secret prodigality of being, is secure from detection, and fearless of reproach. The dreamer retires to his apartments, shuts out the cares and interruptions of mankind, and abandons himself to his own fancy ; new worlds rise up before him, one image is followed by another, and a long succession of *delights dances* round him. He is at last called back

to life by nature, or by custom, and enters peevish into society, because he cannot model it to his own will. He returns from his idle excursions with the asperity, though not with the knowledge, of a student, and hastens again to the same felicity with the eagerness of a man bent upon the advancement of some favourite science. The infatuation strengthens by degrees, and, like the poison of opiates, weakens his powers, without any external symptom of malignity.

It happens, indeed, that these hypocrites of learning are in time detected, and convinced by disgrace and disappointment of the difference between the labour of thought and the sport of musing. But this discovery is often not made till it is too late to recover the time that has been fooled away. A thousand accidents may, indeed, awaken drones to a more early sense of their danger and their shame. But they who are convinced of the necessity of breaking from this habitual drowsiness, too often relapse in spite of their resolution; for these ideal seducers are always near, and neither any particularity of time nor place is necessary to their influence; they invade the soul without warning, and have often charmed down resistance before their approach is perceived or suspected.

This captivity, however, it is necessary for every man to break, who has any desire to be wise or useful, to pass his life with the esteem of others, or to look back with satisfaction from his old age upon his earlier years. In order to regain liberty he must find the means of flying from himself; he must, in opposition to the Stoic precept, teach his desires to fix upon external things; he must adopt the joys and the pains of others, and excite in his mind the want of social pleasures and amicable communication.

*It is, perhaps, not impossible to promote the cure*

of this mental malady, by close application to some new study, which may pour in fresh ideas, and keep curiosity in perpetual motion. But study requires solitude, and solitude is a state dangerous to those who are too much accustomed to sink into themselves. Active employment, or public pleasure, is generally a necessary part of this intellectual regimen, without which, though some remission may be obtained, a complete cure will scarcely be effected.

This is a formidable and obstinate disease of the intellect, of which, when it has once become radiated by time, the remedy is one of the hardest tasks of reason and of virtue. Its slightest attacks, therefore, should be watchfully opposed; and he that finds the frigid and narcotic infection beginning to seize him, should turn his whole attention against it, and check it at the first discovery by proper counteraction.

The great resolution to be formed, when happiness and virtue are thus formidably invaded, is, that no part of life be spent in a state of neutrality or indifference; but that some pleasure be found for every moment that is not devoted to labour; and that, whenever the necessary business of life grows irksome or disgusting, an immediate transition be made to diversion and gaiety.

After the exercises which the health of the body requires, and which have themselves a natural tendency to actuate and invigorate the mind, the most eligible amusement of a rational being seems to be that interchange of thoughts which is practised in free and easy conversation; where suspicion is banished by experience, and emulation by benevolence; where every man speaks with no other restraint than unwillingness to offend, and hears with no other disposition than desire to be pleased.

There must be a time in which every man trifles; *and the only choice that nature offers us, is, to trifle*

- in company or alone. To join profit with pleasure, has been an old precept among men who have had very different conceptions of profit. All have agreed that our amusements should not terminate wholly in the present moment, but contribute more or less to future advantage. He that amuses himself among well-chosen companions, can scarcely fail to receive, from the most careless and obstreperous merriment which virtue can allow, some useful hints; nor can converse on the most familiar topics, without some casual information. The loose sparkles of thoughtless wit may give new light to the mind, and the gay contention for paradoxical positions rectify the opinions.

This is the time in which those friendships that give happiness or consolation, relief or security, are generally formed. A wise and good man is never so amiable as in his unbended and familiar intervals. Heroic generosity, or philosophical discoveries, may compel veneration and respect, but love always implies some kind of natural or voluntary equality, and is only to be excited by that levity and cheerfulness which disencumbers all minds from awe and solicitude, invites the modest to freedom, and exalts the timorous to confidence. This easy gaiety is certain to please, whatever be the character of him that exerts it; if our superiors descend from their elevation, we love them for lessening the distance at which we are placed below them; and inferiors, from whom we can receive no lasting advantage, will always keep our affections while their sprightliness and mirth contribute to our pleasure.

Every man finds himself differently affected by the sight of fortresses of war, and palaces of pleasure; we look on the height and strength of the bulwarks with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, for we cannot



think of defence without admitting images of danger ; but we range delighted and jocund through the gay apartments of the palace, because nothing is impressed by them on the mind but joy and festivity. Such is the difference between great and amiable characters ; with protectors we are safe, with companions we are happy.

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No. 90. SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1751.

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*In tenui labor.*—

VIRG. GEORG. IV. 6.

What toil in slender things !

IT is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers, and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extensive comprehension, is, to common understandings, of little use. They who undertake these subjects are, therefore, always in danger, as one or other inconvenience arises to their imagination, of frightening us with rugged science, or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is, indeed, opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languors of attention ; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses, with which he has diversified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compensated

by the examples, and the irksomeness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated.

Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, whom he proposed to himself for his models, so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit the imitation. There are, indeed, many inconveniences inseparable from our heroic measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil ; inconveniences, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable ; but against which he has struggled with so much art and diligence, that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so melodiously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyric measures are formed from the fragments of the heroic. It is, indeed, scarce possible to break them in such a manner, but that *invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ*, some harmony will still remain, and the due proportions of sound will always be discovered. This measure, therefore, allowed great variety of pauses, and great liberties of connecting one verse with another, because, wherever the line was interrupted, either part singly was musical. But the ancients seem to have confined this privilege to hexameters ; for, in their other measures, though longer than the English heroic, those who wrote after the refinements of versification, venture so seldom to change their pauses, that every variation may be supposed rather a compliance with necessity than the choice of judgement.

Milton was constrained within the narrow limits of a measure not very harmonious in the utmost perfection ; the single parts, therefore, into which it was *to be sometimes broken* by pauses, were in danger of

losing the very form of verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding all his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, no part of a verse ought to be so separated from the rest as not to remain still more harmonious than prose, or to show, by the disposition of the tones, that it is part of a verse. This rule in the old hexameter might be easily observed, but in English will very frequently be in danger of violation: for the order and regularity of accents cannot well be perceived in a succession of fewer than three syllables, which will confine the English poet to only five pauses; it being supposed, that, when he connects one line with another, he should never make a full pause at less distance than that of three syllables from the beginning or end of a verse.

That this rule should be universally and indispensably established, perhaps cannot be granted; something may be allowed to variety, and something to the adaptation of the numbers to the subject; but it will be found generally necessary, and the ear will seldom fail to suffer by its neglect.

Thus when a single syllable is cut off from the rest, it must either be united to the line with which the sense connects it, or be sounded alone. If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony; if disjoined it must stand alone, and, with regard to music, be superfluous; for there is no harmony in a single sound, because it has no proportion to another.

—Hypocrites austere talk,  
Defaming as impure what God declares  
Pure; and commands to some, leaves free to all.

P. L. iv. 744.

When two syllables likewise are absconded from the rest, they evidently want some associate sounds to make them harmonious.

—Eyes—

—more wakeful than to drowse,  
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed  
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile  
To re-salute the world with sacred light  
Leucothea waked.—

P. L. xi. 130.

He ended, and the Son gave signal high  
To the bright minister that watch'd : he blew  
His trumpet.—

*ib.* xi. 72.

First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,  
Regent of day : and all th' horizon round  
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
His longitude through heaven's high road ; the gray  
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,  
Shedding sweet influence.—

*ib.* vii. 370.

The same defect is perceived in the following line,  
where the pause is at the second syllable from the  
beginning.

—The race

Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard  
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears  
To rapture, 'till the savage clamour drown'd  
Both harp and voice ; nor could the muse defend  
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores.

*ib.* vii. 33.

When the pause falls upon the third syllable or the  
seventh, the harmony is better preserved ; but as the  
third and seventh are weak syllables, the period leaves  
the ear unsatisfied, and in expectation of the re-  
maning part of the verse.

— He, with his horrid crew,

Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulph,  
Confounded, though immortal. But his doom  
Reserved him to more wrath ; for now the thought  
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
Torments *him*.—

*ib.* i. 51.

God—with frequent intercourse.  
 Thither will send his winged messengers  
 On errands of supernal grace. So sung  
 The glorious train ascending.

P. L. vii. 569.

It may be, I think, established as a rule, that a pause which concludes a period should be made for the most part upon a strong syllable, as the fourth and sixth; but those pauses which only suspend the sense may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the rest in the third line of the first passage satisfies the ear better than in the fourth, and the close of the second quotation better than of the third.

— The evil soon  
 Drawn back, redounded, as a flood on those  
 From whom it *sprung*; impossible to mix  
 With *blessedness*.—

ib. 56.

— What we by day  
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,  
 One night or two with wanton growth derides,  
 Tending to *wild*.—

ib. ix. 209.

These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands  
 Will keep from wilderness with ease as wide  
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
 Assist *us*.—

ib. 244.

The rest, in the fifth place, has the same inconvenience as in the seventh and third, that the syllable is weak.

Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,  
 And fish with fish, to graze the herb, all leaving,  
 Devour'd each *other*: Nor stood much in awe  
 Of man, but fled him, or, with countenance grim,  
 Glared on him passing.—

ib. x. 710.

*The noblest and most majestic pauses which our*

versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables, which are both strongly sounded in a pure and regular verse, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony.

But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light *appears*, and from the walls of heaven  
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night  
A glimmering *dawn* ; here nature first begins  
Her furthest verge, and chaos to retire. P. L. ii. 1034.

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable, which, taking in a complete compass of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of our lyric measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration.

Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,  
Thou with th'eternal wisdom didst converse,  
Wisdom thy sister ; and with her didst play  
In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleased  
With thy celestial *song*. *ib.* vii. 8.

Or other worlds they seem'd or happy isles,  
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,  
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,  
Thrice happy isles ! But who dwelt happy there,  
He stay'd not to *inquire*.— *ib.* iii. 567.

— He blew

His trumpet, heard in Oreb since, perhaps,  
When God descended ; and, perhaps, once more  
To sound at general *doom*.— *ib.* xi. 73.

If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses, and flow of his verses into each other,

it will appear, that he has performed all that our language would admit ; and the comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will show that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.

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No. 91. TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1751.

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*Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici ;  
Expertus metuit. —*

HOR. EPIST. i. 18. 86.

To court the great ones, and to soothe their pride,  
Seems a sweet task to those that never tried ;  
But those that have, know well that danger's near.

CREECH.

THE Sciences having long seen their votaries labouring for the benefit of mankind, without reward, put up their petition to Jupiter for a more equitable distribution of riches and honours. Jupiter was moved at their complaints, and, touched with the approaching miseries of men, whom the Sciences, wearied with perpetual ingratitude, were now threatening to forsake, and who would have been reduced by their departure to feed in dens upon the mast of trees, to hunt their prey in deserts, and to perish under the paws of animals stronger and fiercer than themselves.

A synod of the celestials was, therefore, convened, in which it was resolved, that Patronage should de-

scend to the assistance of the Sciences. Patronage was the daughter of Astrea, by a mortal father, and had been educated in the school of Truth, by the Goddesses, whom she was now appointed to protect. She had from her mother that dignity of aspect, which struck terror into false merit, and from her mistress that reserve, which made her only accessible to those whom the Sciences brought into her presence.

She came down, with the general acclamation of all the powers that favour learning. Hope danced before her, and Liberality stood at her side, ready to scatter by her direction the gifts which Fortune, who followed her, was commanded to supply. As she advanced towards Parnassus, the cloud which had long hung over it, was immediately dispelled. The shades, before withered with drought, spread their original verdure, and the flowers that had languished with chillness brightened their colours, and invigorated their scents; the Muses tuned their harps and exerted their voices; and all the concert of nature welcomed her arrival.

On Parnassus she fixed her residence, in a palace raised by the Sciences, and adorned with whatever could delight the eye, elevate the imagination, or enlarge the understanding. Here she dispersed the gifts of Fortune with the impartiality of Justice, and the discernment of Truth. Her gate stood always open, and Hope sat at the portal, inviting to entrance all whom the Sciences numbered in their train. The court was, therefore, thronged with innumerable multitudes, of whom, though many returned disappointed, seldom any had confidence to complain; for Patronage was known to neglect few, but for want of the due claims to her regard. Those, therefore, who had solicited her favour without success, ge-



nerally withdrew from public notice, and either diverted their attention to meaner employments, or endeavoured to supply their deficiencies by closer application.

In time, however, the number of those who had miscarried in their pretensions grew so great, that they became less ashamed of their repulses ; and instead of hiding their disgrace in retirement, began to besiege the gates of the palace, and obstruct the entrance of such as they thought likely to be more caressed. The decisions of Patronage, who was but half a Goddess, had been sometimes erroneous ; and though she always made haste to rectify her mistakes, a few instances of her fallibility encouraged every one to appeal from her judgement to his own and that of his companions, who were always ready to clamour in the common cause, and elate each other with reciprocal applause.

Hope was a steady friend to the disappointed, and Impudence incited them to accept a second invitation, and lay their claim again before Patronage. They were again, for the most part, sent back with ignominy, but found Hope not alienated, and Impudence more resolutely zealous ; they, therefore, contrived new expedients, and hoped at last to prevail by their multitudes which were always increasing, and their perseverance which Hope and Impudence forbade them to relax.

Patronage having been long a stranger to the heavenly assemblies, began to degenerate towards terrestrial nature, and forget the precepts of Justice and Truth. Instead of confining her friendship to the Sciences, she suffered herself, by little and little, to contract an acquaintance with Pride, the son of Falsehood, by whose embraces she had two daughters, *Flattery* and *Caprice*. Flattery was nursed by

Liberality, and Caprice by Fortune, without any assistance from the lessons of the Sciences.

Patronage began openly to adopt the sentiments and imitate the manners of her husband, by whose opinion she now directed her decisions with very little heed to the precepts of Truth ; and as her daughters continually gained upon her affections, the Sciences lost their influence, till none found much reason to boast of their reception, but those whom Caprice or Flattery conducted to her throne.

The throngs who had so long waited, and so often been dismissed for want of recommendation from the Sciences, were delighted to see the power of those rigorous Goddesses tending to its extinction. Their patronesses now renewed their encouragements. Hope smiled at the approach of Caprice, and Impudence was always at hand to introduce her clients to Flattery.

Patronage had now learned to procure herself reverence by ceremonies and formalities, and instead of admitting her petitioners to an immediate audience, ordered the antechamber to be erected, called among mortals, the Hall of Expectation. Into this hall the entrance was easy to those whom Impudence had consigned to Flattery, and it was, therefore, crowded with a promiscuous throng, assembled from every corner of the earth, pressing forward with the utmost eagerness of desire, and agitated with all the anxieties of competition.

They entered this general receptacle with ardour and alacrity, and made no doubt of speedy access, under the conduct of Flattery, to the presence of Patronage. But it generally happened that they were here left to their destiny, for the inner doors were committed to Caprice, who opened and shut them, as it seemed, by chance, and rejected or admitted

without any settled rule of distinction. In the mean time, the miserable attendants were left to wear out their lives in alternate exultation and dejection, delivered up to the sport of Suspicion, who was always whispering into their ears designs against them which were never formed, and of Envy, who diligently pointed out the good fortune of one or other of their competitors. Infamy flew round the hall, and scattered mildews from her wings, with which every one was stained ; Reputation followed her with slower flight, and endeavoured to hide the blemishes with paint, which was immediately brushed away, or separated of itself, and left the stains more visible ; nor were the spots of Infamy ever effaced, but with limpid water effused by the hand of Time from a well which sprung up beneath the throne of Truth.

It frequently happened that Science, unwilling to lose the ancient prerogative of recommending to Patronage, would lead her followers into the Hall of Expectation ; but they were soon discouraged from attending, for not only Envy and Suspicion incessantly tormented them, but Impudence considered them as intruders, and incited Infamy to blacken them. They therefore quickly retired, but seldom without some spots which they could scarcely wash away, and which showed that they had once waited in the Hall of Expectation.

The rest continued to expect the happy moment at which Caprice should beckon them to approach ; and endeavoured to propitiate her, not with Homeric harmony, the representation of great actions, or the recital of noble sentiments, but with soft and voluptuous melody, intermingled with the praises of Patronage and Pride, by whom they were heard at once with pleasure and contempt.

Some were, indeed, admitted by Caprice, when

they least expected it, and heaped by Patronage with the gifts of Fortune, but they were from that time chained to her footstool, and condemned to regulate their lives by her glances and her nods ; they seemed proud of their manacles, and seldom complained of any drudgery, however servile, or any affront, however contemptuous ; yet they were often, notwithstanding their obedience, seized on a sudden by Caprice, divested of their ornaments, and thrust back into the Hall of Expectation.

Here they mingled again with the tumult, and all, except a few whom experience had taught to seek happiness in the regions of liberty, continued to spend hours, and days, and years, courting the smile of Caprice by the arts of Flattery ; till at length new crowds pressed in upon them, and drove them forth at different outlets into the habitations of Disease, and Shame, and Poverty, and Despair, where they passed the rest of their lives in narratives of promises and breaches of faith, of joys and sorrows, of hopes and disappointments.

The Sciences, after a thousand indignities, retired from the palace of Patronage, and having long wandered over the world in grief and distress, were led at last to the cottage of Independence, the daughter of Fortitude ; where they were taught by Prudence and Parsimony to support themselves in dignity and quiet.

No. 92. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1751.

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*Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum  
Perstringis aures ; jam litui strepunt.*

HOR. CAR. II. l. 17.

Lo! now the clarion's voice I hear,  
Its threat'ning murmurs pierce mine ear ;  
And in thy lines with brazen breath  
The trumpet sounds the charge of death.

FRANCIS.

It has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined, different in different minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument, but example and authority. It is, indeed, so little subject to the examinations of reason, that Paschal supposes it to end where demonstration begins, and maintains, that without incongruity and absurdity we cannot speak of geometrical beauty.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would perhaps require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases, apparent that this quality is merely relative and comparative ; that we pronounce things beautiful because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than

we have been accustomed to find it in other things of the same kind ; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge increases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind ; and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast, because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.

It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles ; to improve opinion into knowledge ; and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegancies which appeal wholly to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantresses of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense, or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances ; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I *shall endeavour to examine how much these con-*

harmonies have been observed by the poets, or directed by the critics, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by *MILTON*.

*HOMER*, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, as 'he that, of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound: for there are,' says he, 'innumerable passages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose; or in which, on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness, are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish and slow space with which the blind *Polypheme* groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it.'

Κίχλον δ' ἢ στυγχευε τι καὶ ἄλκιον ἄνθρωπον,  
 Χερσὶ ψαλαφίῃσι.—

ODYS. I. 415.

Mean time the cyclop raging with his wound,  
 Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round.

POPE.

The critic then proceeds to show, that the efforts of *Achilles* struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the syllables, the slow succession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants.

Διὸν δ' ἀμφ' Ἀχιλλῆα παλάμῃσι ἴσταντο κύμα,  
 "Ωθι δ' ἐν σάκῃ πίστασι ῥέος οὐδὲ πόδισσι  
 Εἶνε σσηγίζεσθαι.—

IL. Φ. 240.

So oft the surge, in wat'ry mountains spread,  
 Beats on his back, or bursts upon his head.  
 Yet dauntless still the adverse flood he braves,  
 And still indignant bounds above the waves.

Tir'd by the tides, his knees relax with toil ;  
Wash'd from beneath him, slides the slimy soil.

POPE.

When Homer describes the crush of men dashed  
against a rock, he collects the most unpleasing and  
harsh sounds.

Σὺν δὲ δύν μάστιγας, ὥστε σκύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ  
Κόπτει· ἐκ δ' ἐγκίφαλος χαμάδις ῥίι, δίσι δὲ γαῖαν.

ODYSS. I. 289.

— His bloody hand  
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,  
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor :  
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.

POPE.

And when he would place before the eyes something  
dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the  
strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult ut-  
terance.

Τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γόργῃ βλοσυρῶπις ἰσσιφανῶτο  
Δινὸν δερκομένη· περὶ δὲ δαίμος τι φόβος τι.

Tremendous Gorgon frown'd upon its field,  
And circling terrors fill'd the expressive shield.

POPE.

Many other examples Dionysius produces ; but  
these will sufficiently show, that either he was fanci-  
ful, or we have lost the genuine pronunciation ; for  
I know not whether, in any one of these instances,  
such similitude can be discovered. It seems, in-  
deed, probable, that the veneration with which Ho-  
mer was read, produced many supposititious beauties ;  
for though it is certain, that the sound of many of  
his verses very justly corresponds with the things  
expressed, yet when the force of his imagination,  
which gave him full possession of every object, is  
considered, together with the flexibility of his lan-



guage, of which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not, however, to be doubted, that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed so much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured, among other excellencies, to exhibit this similitude; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versification. This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his Art of Poetry.

*Haud satis est illis utcunque claudere versum.—  
Omnia sed numeris vocum concordibus aptant,  
Atque sono quæcunque canunt imitantur, et apta  
Verborum facie, et quæsito carminis ore.  
Nam diversa opus est veluti dare versibus ora,—  
Hic melior motuque pedum, et pernicious alis,  
Molle viam tacito lapsu per levia radit:  
Ille autem membris, ac mole, ignavius, ingens  
Incedit, tardo molimine subsidendo.  
Ecce aliquis subit egregio pulcherrimus ore,  
Cui lætum membris Venus omnibus afflat honorem.  
Contra alius rudis, informes ostendit et artus,  
Hirsutumque supercilium, ac caudam sinuosam,  
Ingratus visu, sonitu illætabilis ipso.—  
Ergo ubi jam nautæ, spumas salis ære ruentes  
Incubere mari, videas spumare, reductis  
Convulsum remis, rostrisque stridentibus, æquor.  
Tunc longè sale saxa sonant, tunc et freta ventis  
Incipiunt agitata tumescere: littore fluctus  
Illidunt rauco, atque refracta remurmurat unda  
Ad scopulos, cumulo insequitur præruptus aquæ mons.—  
Cum vero ex alto speculatus cœrula Nereus  
Leniit in morem stagni, placidæque paludis,  
Labitur uncta vadis abies, natat uncta carina.—  
Verba etiam res exiguas angusta sequuntur,  
Ingentesque juvant ingentia: cuncta gigantem  
Vasta decent, vultus immanes, pectora lata,  
Et magni membrorum artus, magna ossa, lacertique.  
Atque adeo, siquid geritur molimine magno,  
Adde moram, et pariter tecum quoque verba laborent*

*Segnia : seu quando vi multa gleba coactis  
 Æternum frangenda bidentibus, æquore seu cum  
 Cornua velatarum obvertimus antennarum.  
 At mora si fuerit damno, properare jubebo.  
 Si se forte cava extulerit mala vipera terra,  
 Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, pastor ;  
 Ferte citi flammæ, date tela, repellite pestem.  
 Ipse etiam versus ruat, in præcepsque feratur,  
 Immenso cum præcipitans ruit Oceano nox,  
 Aut cum, percussus graviter, procumbit humi bos,  
 Cumque etiam requies rebus datur, ipsa quoque ultro  
 Carmina paulisper cursu cessare videbis,  
 In medio interrupta : quæruni cum freta ponti,  
 Postquam auræ posuere, quiescere protinus ipsum  
 Cernere erit, mediisque inceptis sistere versus.  
 Quid dicam, senior cum telum imbelle sine ictu  
 Invalidus jacit, et defectis viribus æger ?  
 Nam quoque tum versus segni pariter pede languet :  
 Sanguis hebet, frigent effrætæ in corpore vires.  
 Fortem autem juvenem deceat prorumpere in arces  
 Evertisse domos, præfractaque quadrupedantum  
 Pectora pectoribus perrumpere, sternere turres  
 Ingentes, totâque, ferum, dare funera campo.*

'Tis not enough his verses to complete,  
 In measure, number, or determined feet.  
 To all, proportion'd terms he must dispense,  
 And make the sound a picture of the sense :  
 The correspondent words exactly frame,  
 The look, the features, and the mien the same.  
 With rapid feet and wings, without delay,  
 This swiftly flies, and smoothly skims away :  
 This blooms with youth and beauty in his face,  
 And Venus breathes on every limb a grace ;  
 That, of rude form, his uncouth members shows,  
 Looks horrible, and frowns with his rough brows ;  
 His monstrous tail in many a fold and wind,  
 Voluminous and vast, curls up behind ;  
 At once the image and the lines appear,  
 Rude to the eye, and frightful to the ear.  
 Lo ! when the sailors steer the pond'rous ships,  
 And plough, with brazen beaks, the foamy deeps,  
 Incumbent on the main that roars around,  
 Beneath the lab'ring oars the waves resound ;  
*The prows wide echoing through the dark profound :*

To the loud call each distant rock replies;  
Tost by the storm the tow'ring surges rise;  
While the hoarse ocean beats the sounding shore;  
Dash'd from the strand, the flying waters roar,  
Flash at the shock, and gath'ring in a heap,  
The liquid mountains rise, and over-hang the deep.  
But when blue Neptune from his car surveys,  
And calms at one regard the raging seas,  
Stretch'd like a peaceful lake the deep subsides,  
And the pitch'd vessel o'er the surface glides.  
When things are small, the terms should still be so;  
For low words please us when the theme is low.  
But when some giant, horrible and grim,  
Enormous in his gait, and vast in every limb,  
Stalks tow'ring on; the swelling words must rise  
In just proportion to the monster's size.  
If some large weight his huge arm strive to shove,  
The verse too labours; the throng'd words scarce move.  
When each stiff clod beneath the pond'rous plough  
Crumbles and breaks, the encumber'd lines must flow.  
Nor less, when pilots catch the friendly gales,  
Unfurl their shrouds, and hoist the wide-stretch'd sails.  
But if the poem suffers from delay,  
Let the lines fly precipitate away.  
And when the viper issues from the brake,  
Be quick; with stones, and brands, and fire, attack  
His rising crest, and drive the serpent back.  
When night descends, or stunn'd by num'rous strokes,  
And groaning, to the earth drops the vast ox;  
The line too sinks with correspondent sound,  
Flat with the steer, and headlong to the ground.  
When the wild waves subside, and tempests cease,  
And hush the roarings of the sea to peace;  
So oft we see the interrupted strain  
Stopp'd in the midst—and with the silent main  
Pause for a space—at last it glides again.  
When Priam strains his aged arms, to throw  
His unavailing jav'lin at the foe;  
His blood congeal'd, and ev'ry nerve unstrung,  
Then with the theme complies the artful song;  
Like him, the solitary numbers flow,  
Weak, trembling, melancholy, stiff, and slow.  
Not so young Pyrrhus, who with rapid force  
Beats down embattled armies in his course.

The raging youth on trembling Ilion falls,  
 Bursts her strong gates, and shakes her lofty walls ;  
 Provokes his flying courser to the speed,  
 In full career to charge the warlike steed :  
 He piles the field with mountains of the slain ;  
 He pours, he storms, he thunders through the plain.

PITT.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its increase.

Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows.  
 But when loud billows lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.  
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,  
 The line too labours, and the words move slow ;  
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after this imagery of sound. The verse intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility ; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, distinctly imaged, for it requires very little skill to make our language rough ; but in these lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified ; why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long ; they, therefore,

naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure ; and the word ‘ unbending ’, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules and these examples have taught our present critics to inquire very studiously and minutely into sounds and cadences. It is, therefore, useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded ; what discoveries they have made ; and whether any rules can be established which may guide us hereafter in such researches.

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No. 93. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1751.

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—*Experiar quid concedatur in illos*  
*Quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina.*

JUV. SAT. i. ult.

More safely truth to urge her claim presumes,  
 On names now found alone on books and tombs.

THERE are few books on which more time is spent by young students, than on treatises which deliver the characters of authors ; nor any which oftener deceive the expectation of the reader, or fill his mind with more opinions which the progress of his studies and the increase of his knowledge oblige him to resign.

Baillet has introduced his collection of the *decisions of the learned*, by an enumeration of the preju-

dices which mislead the critic, and raise the passions in rebellion against the judgement. His catalogue, though large, is imperfect; and who can hope to complete it? The beauties of writing have been observed to be often such as cannot, in the present state of human knowledge be evinced by evidence, or drawn out into demonstrations; they are, therefore, wholly subject to the imagination, and do not force their effects upon a mind preoccupied by unfavourable sentiments, nor overcome the counter-action of a false principle, or of stubborn partiality:

To convince any man against his will is hard, but to please him against his will is justly pronounced by Dryden to be above the reach of human abilities. Interest and passion will hold out long against the closest siege of diagrams and syllogisms, but they are absolutely impregnable to imagery and sentiment; and will for ever bid defiance to the most powerful strains of Virgil or Homer, though they may give way in time to the batteries of Euclid or Archimedes.

In trusting, therefore, to the sentence of a critic, we are in danger not only from that vanity which exalts writers too often to the dignity of teaching what they are yet to learn, from that negligence which sometimes steals upon the most vigilant caution, and that fallibility to which the condition of nature has subjected every human understanding; but from a thousand extrinsic and accidental causes, from every thing which can excite kindness or malevolence, veneration or contempt.

Many of those who have determined with great boldness upon the various degrees of literary merit, may be justly suspected of having passed sentence, as Seneca remarks of Claudius,

*Una tantum parte audita,  
Sæpe et nulla,*

without much knowledge of the cause before them : for it will not easily be imagined of Langbane, Borrichius, or Rapin, that they had very accurately perused all the books which they praise or censure ; or that, even if nature and learning had qualified them for judges, they could read for ever with the attention necessary to just criticism. Such performances, however, are not wholly without their use ; for they are commonly just echoes to the voice of fame, and transmit the general suffrage of mankind when they have no particular motives to suppress it.

Critics, like the rest of mankind, are very frequently misled by interest. The bigotry with which editors regard the authors whom they illustrate or correct, has been generally remarked. Dryden was known to have written most of his critical dissertations only to recommend the work upon which he then happened to be employed ; and Addison is suspected to have denied the expediency of poetical justice, because his own Cato was condemned to perish in a good cause.

There are prejudices which authors, not otherwise weak or corrupt, have indulged without scruple ; and perhaps some of them are so complicated with our natural affections, that they cannot easily be disentangled from the heart. Scarce any can hear with impartiality a comparison between the writers of his own and another country ; and though it cannot, I think, be charged equally on all nations, that they are blinded with this literary patriotism, yet there are none that do not look upon their authors with the fondness of affinity, and esteem them as well for the place of their birth, as for their knowledge or their wit. There is, therefore, seldom much respect due to comparative criticism, when the competitors are of *different* countries, unless the judge is of a nation

equally indifferent to both. The Italians could not for a long time believe, that there was any learning beyond the mountains; and the French seem generally persuaded, that there are no wits or reasoners equal to their own. I can scarcely conceive that if Scaliger had not considered himself as allied to Virgil, by being born in the same country, he would have found his works so much superior to those of Homer, or have thought the controversy worthy of so much zeal, vehemence, and acrimony.

There is, indeed, one prejudice, and only one, by which it may be doubted whether it is any dishonour to be sometimes misguided. Criticism has so often given occasion to the envious and ill-natured of gratifying their malignity, that some have thought it necessary to recommend the virtue of candour without restriction, and to preclude all future liberty of censure. Writers possessed with this opinion, are continually enforcing civility and decency, recommending to critics the proper diffidence of themselves, and inculcating the veneration due to celebrated names.

I am not of opinion that these professed enemies of arrogance and severity have much more benevolence or modesty than the rest of mankind; or that they feel in their own hearts, any other intention than to distinguish themselves by their softness and delicacy. Some are modest because they are timorous, and some are lavish of praise because they hope to be repaid.

There is, indeed, some tenderness due to living writers, when they attack none of those truths which are of importance to the happiness of mankind, and have committed no other offence than that of betraying their own ignorance or dulness. I should think it cruelty to crush an insect who had provoked me *only by buzzing in my ear*; and ~~would~~ not willing-



ly interrupt the dream of harmless stupidity, or destroy the jest which makes its author laugh. Yet I am far from thinking this tenderness universally necessary; for he that writes may be considered as a kind of general challenger, whom every one has a right to attack; since he quits the common rank of life, steps forward beyond the lists, and offers his merit to the public judgement. To commence author is to claim praise, and no man can justly aspire to honour, but at the hazard of disgrace.

But whatever be decided concerning contemporaries, whom he that knows the treachery of the human heart, and considers how often we gratify our own pride or envy under the appearance of contending for elegance and propriety, will find himself not much inclined to disturb; there can surely be no exemptions pleaded to secure them from criticism, who can no longer suffer by reproach, and of whom nothing now remains but their writings and their names. Upon these authors, the critic is undoubtedly at full liberty to exercise the strictest severity, since he endangers only his own fame, and, like *Æneas* when he drew his sword in the infernal regions, encounters phantoms which cannot be wounded. He may indeed pay some regard to established reputation; but he can by that show of reverence consult only his own security, for all other motives are now at an end.

The faults of a writer of acknowledged excellence are more dangerous, because the influence of his example is more extensive; and the interest of learning requires that they should be discovered and stigmatized, before they have the sanction of antiquity conferred upon them, and become precedents of indisputable authority.

It has, indeed, been advanced by Addison, as one of the characteristics of a true critic, that he points

out beauties rather than faults. But it is rather natural to a man of learning and genius, to apply himself chiefly to the study of writers who have more beauties than faults to be displayed: for the duty of criticism is neither to depreciate nor dignify by partial representations, but to hold out the light of reason, whatever it may discover; and to promulgate the determinations of truth, whatever she shall dictate.

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No. 94. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1751.

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— *Bonus atque fidus*  
*Judex—per obstantes catervas*  
*Explicuit sua victor arma.*

HOR. CAR. iv. 10. 40.

Perpetual magistrate is he  
 Who keeps strict justice full in sight;  
 Who bids the crowd at awful distance gaze,  
 And virtue's arms victoriously displays.

FRANCIS.

THE resemblance of poetic numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together, or as comprised in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words, or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language which admits of poetry, in every author whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind and

whose choice and variety of language readily supplies him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his measure with his subject, even without any effort of the understanding, or intervention of the judgement. To revolve jollity and mirth necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eye with vivacity; and reflection on gloomy situations and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers, as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the similitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and the exultation of triumph; and the same languor of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that on many occasions we make the music which we imagine ourselves to hear; that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasing message in an unpleasant manner, and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those whom for any reason we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptations of harmony are chimerical; that Homer had no extraordinary attention to the melody of his verse when he described a nuptial festivity:

Νυμφὰς δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δαΐδων, ὑπόλαμπόμενάων,  
'Ηγίον ἀνὰ ἀστὺ πολλὴ δ' ὑμῖναιος ὀρώρει;

Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,  
And solemn dance, and hymeneal rite;  
Along the street the new-made brides are led,  
With torches flaming, to the nuptial bed;

The youthful dancers in a circle bound  
To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound.

POPE.

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he supposed Virgil endeavouring to represent, by uncommon sweetness of numbers, the adventitious beauty of *Æneas* ;

*Os, humerosque Deo similis : namque ipse decoram  
Cæsariem nato genitrix, lumenque juventæ  
Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflarat honores.*

ÆN. i. 593.

The Trojan chief appear'd in open sight,  
August in visage, and serenely bright.  
His mother goddess, with her hands divine,  
Had form'd his curling locks, and made his temples shine ;  
And given his rolling eyes a sparkling grace,  
And breathed a youthful vigour on his face.

DRYDEN.

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions :

Fountains ! and ye that warble as ye flow,  
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.

P. L. V. 195.

That Milton understood the force of sounds well adjusted, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient measures, cannot be doubted, since he was both a musician and a critic ; but he seems to have considered these conformities of cadence, as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excellencies unworthy of his ambition ; for it will not be found that he has always assigned the same cast of numbers to the same subjects. He has given in two passages very minute descriptions of angelic beauty ; but though the images are nearly the same, the numbers will be found, upon comparison, very different.

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R

And now a stripling cherub he appears,  
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
 Youth smiled celestial, and to ev'ry limb  
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd ;  
 Under a coronet his flowing hair,  
 In curls on either cheek play'd : wings he wore  
 Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold.

P. L. iii. 636.

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correspondent with that symmetrical elegance and easy grace which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compensated by the representation of Raphael, which equally delights the ear and imagination :

A seraph wing'd : six wings he wore to shade  
 His lineaments divine ; the pair that clad  
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast  
 With regal ornament : the middle pair  
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round  
 Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold,  
 And colours dipp'd in Heaven : the third his feet  
 Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,  
 Sky-tinctured grain ! like Maia's son he stood,  
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd  
 The circuit wide.—

*ib.* v. 277.

The adumbration of particular and distinct images by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound, is sometimes studied, and sometimes casual. Every language has many words formed in imitation of the noises which they signify. Such are Stridor, Balo, and Beatus, in Latin ; and in English, to growl, to buzz, to hiss, and to jar. Words of this kind give to a verse the proper similitude of sound, without much labour of the writer, and such happiness is therefore rather to be attributed to fortune than skill ; yet they are sometimes combined with great pro-

priety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impression of the idea. We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil :

*Et fugit horrendum stridens elapsa sagitta ;*

JEN. ix. 632.

Th' impetuous arrow whizzes on the wing.

POPE.

and the creaking of hell-gates, in the description by Milton :

—Open fly,

With impetuous recoil and jarring sound

Th' infernal doors ; and on their hinges grate

Harsh thunder.—

P. L. ii. 879.

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us, that the sound of Homer's verses sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk : is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who, after long inquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangor of a trumpet ? The representative power of poetic harmony consists of sound and measure ; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The critics, however, have struck out other similitudes ; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by writers whose opinion the world has reason to regard :

*Vertitur interea cælum, et ruit oceano nox.*

VIRG. *ÆN.* ii. 250.

Meantime the rapid heavens roll'd down the light,  
And on the shaded ocean rush'd the night. DRYDEN.

*Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos.*

*ÆN.* v. 481.

Down drops the beast, nor needs a second wound ;  
But sprawls in pangs of death, and spurns the ground. DRYDEN.

*Parturiunt montes ; nascetur ridiculus mus.*

ARS. POET. 139.

The mountains labour, and a mouse is born.

ROSCOMMON.

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain ; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse ; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo :

—I fled, and cried out Death :

Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd  
From all her caves, and back resounded Death.

P. L. ii. 787.

The measure or time in pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only the modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession

of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This at least was the power of the spondaic and dactylic harmony, but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can, indeed, sometimes, by encumbering and retarding the line, show the difficulty of a progress made by strong efforts and with frequent interruptions, or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos :

So he with difficulty and labour hard  
Moved on : with difficulty and labour he.

P. L. ii. 1021.

Thus he has described the leviathans or whales :

Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait.

ib. vii. 411.

But he has at other times neglected such representations, as may be observed in the volubility and levity of these lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant :

—Descent and fall

To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,  
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear  
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,  
With what compulsion and laborious flight  
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then. ib. ii. 16.

In another place, he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting :

—Tripping ebb; that stole

With soft foot tow'ards the deep who now had stopp'd  
His sluices. ib. xi. 847.

*It is not indeed to be expected, that the sound*



should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it ; and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellencies which have ennobled all other poets, will, perhaps, be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms ; for there are readers who discover that in this passage,

So stretch'd out huge in length the arch fiend lay,

P. L. i. 269.

a long form is described in a long line ; but the truth is, that length of body is only mentioned in a slow line, to which it has only the resemblance of time to space, of an hour to a may-pole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark :

Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,

Began to build a vessel of huge bulk ;

Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and height.

ib. xi. 728.

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk ; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the measure ; for what analogy can there be between modulations of sound, and corporeal dimensions ?

Milton, indeed, seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far as not to reject it when it came unsought ; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform ; a single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature,

would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense ; and he who had undertaken to vindicate the ways of God to man, might have been accused of neglecting his cause, had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.

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No. 95. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1751.

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*Parcus Deorum cultor, et infrequens  
Insanientis dum sapientiae  
Consultus erro ; nunc retrorsum  
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus  
Cogor relictos.—*

HOR. CAR. i. 34.

A fugitive from Heav'n and prayer,  
I mock'd at all religious fear,  
Deep scienced in the massy lore  
Of mad philosophy ; but now  
Hoist sail, and back my voyage plough  
To that blest harbour, which I left before.

FRANCIS.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,  
“ THERE are many diseases, both of the body and mind, which it is far easier to prevent than to cure, and therefore I hope you will think me employed in an office not useless either to learning or virtue, if I describe the symptoms of an intellectual malady, which, though at first it seizes only the passions, will, if not speedily remedied, infect the reason, and from blasting the blossoms of knowledge, proceed, in time, to canker the root.

“ I was born in the house of discord. My parents were of unsuitable ages, contrary tempers, and different religions, and therefore employed the spirit and acuteness which nature had very liberally bestowed upon both, in hourly disputes, and incessant contrivances to detect each other in the wrong ; so that from the first exertions of reason I was bred a disputant, trained up in all the arts of domestic sophistry, initiated in a thousand low stratagems, nimble shifts, and sly concealments ; versed in all the turns of altercation, and acquainted with the whole discipline of fending and proving.

“ It was necessarily my care to preserve the kindness of both the controvertists, and, therefore, I had very early formed the habit of suspending my judgement, of hearing arguments with indifference, inclining as occasion required to either side, and of holding myself undetermined between them till I knew for what opinion I might conveniently declare.

“ Thus, Sir, I acquired very early the skill of disputation ; and, as we naturally love the arts in which we believe ourselves to excel, I did not let my abilities lie useless, nor suffer my dexterity to be lost for want of practice. I engaged in perpetual wrangles with my school-fellows, and was never to be convinced or repressed by any other arguments than blows, by which my antagonists commonly determined the controversy, as I was, like the Roman orator, much more eminent for eloquence than courage.

“ At the university I found my predominant ambition completely gratified by the study of logic. I impressed upon my memory a thousand axioms, and ten thousand distinctions, practised every form of syllogism, passed all my days in the schools of disputation, and slept every night with Smiglecius on my pillow.

“ You will not doubt but such a genius was soon

raised to eminence by such application: I was celebrated in my third year for the most artful opponent that the university could boast, and became the terror and envy of all the candidates for philosophical reputation.

“ My renown, indeed, was not purchased but at the price of all my time and all my studies. I never spoke but to contradict, nor declaimed but in defence of a position universally acknowledged to be false, and therefore worthy, in my opinion, to be adorned with all the colours of false representation, and strengthened with all the arts of fallacious subtilty.

“ My father, who had no other wish than to see his son richer than himself, easily concluded that I should distinguish myself among the professors of the law; and, therefore, when I had taken my first degree, despatched me to the Temple with a paternal admonition, that I should never suffer myself to feel shame, for nothing but modesty could retard my fortune.

“ Vitiating, ignorant, and heady as I was, I had not yet lost my reverence for virtue, and, therefore, could not receive such dictates without horror; but however was pleased with his determination of my course of life, because he placed me in the way that leads soonest from the prescribed walks of discipline and education, to the open fields of liberty and choice.

“ I was now in the place where every one catches the contagion of vanity, and soon began to distinguish myself by sophisms and paradoxes. I declared war against all received opinions and established rules, and levelled my batteries particularly against those universal principles which had stood unshaken in all the vicissitudes of literature, and are considered as the inviolable temples of truth, or the impregnable bulwarks of science.

“ *I applied myself chiefly to those parts of learn-*

ing which have filled the world with doubt and perplexity, and could readily produce all the arguments relating to matter and motion, time and space, identity and infinity.

“ I was equally able and equally willing to maintain the system of Newton or Descartes, and favoured occasionally the hypothesis of Ptolemy, or that of Copernicus. I sometimes exalted vegetables to sense, and sometimes degraded animals to mechanism.

“ Nor was I less inclined to weaken the credit of history, or perplex the doctrines of polity. I was always of the party which I heard the company condemn.

“ Among the zealots of liberty I could harangue with great copiousness upon the advantages of absolute monarchy, the secrecy of its counsels, and the expedition of its measures ; and often celebrated the blessings produced by the extinction of parties, and preclusion of debates.

“ Among the assertors of regal authority, I never failed to declaim with republican warmth upon the original charter of universal liberty, the corruption of courts, and the folly of voluntary submission to those whom nature has levelled with ourselves.

“ I knew the defects of every scheme of government, and the inconveniences of every law. I sometimes showed how much the condition of mankind would be improved, by breaking the world into petty sovereignties, and sometimes displayed the felicity and peace which universal monarchy would diffuse over the earth.

“ To every acknowledged fact I found innumerable objections ; for it was my rule, to judge of history only by abstracted probability, and, therefore, I made no scruple of bidding defiance to testimony. I have more than once questioned the existence of Alexander the Great ; and having demonstrated the folly

of erecting edifices like the pyramids of Egypt, I frequently hinted my suspicion that the world had been long deceived, and that they were to be found only in the narratives of travellers.

“ It had been happy for me could I have confined my scepticism to historical controversies, and philosophical disquisitions; but having now violated my reason, and accustomed myself to inquire not after proofs, but objections, I had perplexed truth with falsehood, till my ideas were confused, my judgement embarrassed, and my intellects distorted. The habit of considering every proposition as alike uncertain, left me no test by which any tenet could be tried; every opinion presented both sides with equal evidence, and my fallacies began to operate upon my own mind in more important inquiries. It was at last the sport of my vanity to weaken the obligations of moral duty, and efface the distinctions of good and evil, till I had deadened the sense of conviction, and abandoned my heart to the fluctuations of uncertainty, without anchor and without compass, without satisfaction of curiosity, or peace of conscience, without principles of reason, or motives of action.

“ Such is the hazard of repressing the first perceptions of truth, of spreading for diversion the snares of sophistry, and engaging reason against its own determinations.

“ The disproportions of absurdity grow less and less visible as we are reconciled by degress to the deformity of a mistress; and falsehood, by long use, is assimilated to the mind, as poison to the body.

“ I had soon the mortification of seeing my conversation courted only by the ignorant or wicked, by either boys who were enchanted by novelty, or wretches, who, having long disobeyed virtue and reason, were now desirous of my assistance to dethrone them.

“ Thus alarmed, I shuddered at my own corrup-

tion ; and that pride by which I had been seduced contributed to reclaim me. I was weary of continual irresolution, and a perpetual equipoise of the mind ; and ashamed of being the favourite of those who were scorned and shunned by the rest of mankind.

“ I therefore retired from all temptation to dispute, prescribed a new regimen to my understanding, and resolved, instead of rejecting all established opinions which I could not prove, to tolerate though not adopt all which I could not confute. I forbore to heat my imagination with needless controversies, to discuss questions confessedly uncertain, and refrained steadily from gratifying my vanity by the support of falsehood.

“ By this method I am at length recovered from my argumental delirium, and find myself in the state of one awakened from the confusion and tumult of a feverish dream. I rejoice in the new possession of evidence and reality, and step on from truth to truth with confidence and quiet.

“ I am, SIR, &c.

“ PERTINAX.”

No. 96. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1751.

*Quod si Platonis musa personat verum,  
Quod quisque discit, immemor recordatur.*

BOETHIUS.

Truth in Platonic ornaments bedeck'd,  
Enforced we love, unheeding recollect.

It is reported of the Persians, by an ancient writer, that the sum of their education consisted in teaching youth to ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth.

The bow and the horse were easily mastered, but

it would have been happy if we had been informed by what arts veracity was cultivated, and by what preservatives a Persian mind was secured against the temptations to falsehood.

There are, indeed, in the present corruption of mankind, many incitements to forsake truth ; the need of palliating our own faults, and the convenience of imposing on the ignorance or credulity of others, so frequently occur ; so many immediate evils are to be avoided ; and so many present gratifications obtained, by craft and delusion, that very few of those who are much entangled in life, have spirit and constancy sufficient to support them in the steady practice of open veracity.

In order that all men may be taught to speak truth, it is necessary that all likewise should learn to hear it ; for no species of falsehood is more frequent than flattery, to which the coward is betrayed by fear, the dependant by interest, and the friend by tenderness : those who are neither servile nor timorous, are yet desirous to bestow pleasure ; and while unjust demands of praise continue to be made, there will always be some whom hope, fear, or kindness, will dispose to pay them.

The guilt of falsehood is very widely extended, and many whom their conscience can scarcely charge with stooping to a lie, have vitiated the morals of others by their vanity, and patronized the vice which they believe themselves to abhor.

Truth is, indeed, not often welcome for its own sake ; it is generally unpleasing, because contrary to our wishes and opposite to our practice ; and as our attention naturally follows our interest, we hear unwillingly what we are afraid to know, and soon forget what we have no inclination to impress upon our memories.



For this reason many arts of instruction have been invented, by which the reluctance against truth may be overcome, and as physic is given to children in confecti-  
-ons, precepts have been hidden under a thousand appearances, that mankind may be bribed by pleasure to escape destruction.

While the world was yet in its infancy, Truth came among mortals from above, and Falsehood from below. Truth was the daughter of Jupiter and Wisdom ; Falsehood was the progeny of Folly impregnated by the wind. They advanced with equal confidence to seize the dominion of the new creation, and as their enmity and their force were well known to the celestials, all the eyes of Heaven were turned upon the contest.

Truth seemed conscious of superior power and juster claim, and therefore came on towering and majestic, unassisted and alone ; Reason indeed always attended her, but appeared her follower rather than companion. Her march was slow and stately, but her motion was perpetually progressive, and when once she had grounded her foot, neither gods nor men could force her to retire.

Falsehood always endeavoured to copy the mien and attitudes of Truth, and was very successful in the arts of mimicry. She was surrounded, animated, and supported by innumerable legions of appetites and passions, but, like other feeble commanders, was obliged often to receive law from her allies. Her motions were sudden, irregular, and violent ; for she had no steadiness nor constancy. She often gained conquests by hasty incursions, which she never hoped to keep up by her own strength, but maintained by the help of the passions, whom she generally found resolute and faithful.

It sometimes happened that the antagonists met

in full opposition. In these encounters, Falsehood always invested her head with clouds, and commanded Fraud to place ambushes about her. In her left hand she bore the shield of Impudence, and the quiver of Sophistry rattled on her shoulder. All the passions attended at her call: Vanity clapped her wings before, and Obstinacy supported her behind. Thus guarded and assisted, she sometimes advanced against Truth, and sometimes waited the attack; but always endeavoured to skirmish at a distance, perpetually shifted her ground, and let fly her arrows in different directions; for she certainly found that her strength failed, whenever the eye of Truth darted full upon her.

Truth had the awful aspect though not the thunder of her father, and when the long continuance of the contest brought them near to one another, Falsehood let the arms of Sophistry fall from her grasp, and, holding up the shield of Impudence with both her hands, sheltered herself amongst the passions.

Truth, though she was often wounded, always recovered in a short time; but it was common for the slightest hurt, received by Falsehood, to spread its malignity to the neighbouring parts, and to burst open again when it seemed to have been cured.

Falsehood, in a short time, found by experience that her superiority consisted only in the celerity of her course, and the changes of her posture. She therefore ordered Suspicion to beat the ground before her, and avoided with great care to cross the way of Truth, who, as she never varied her point, but moved constantly upon the same line, was easily escaped by the oblique and desultory movements, the quick retreats and active doubles which Falsehood always practised, when the enemy began to raise terror by her approach.

By this procedure, Falsehood every hour encroached upon the world, and extended her empire through all climes and regions. Wherever she carried her victories, she left the Passions in full authority behind her ; who were so well pleased with command, that they held out with great obstinacy when Truth came to seize their posts, and never failed to retard her progress, though they could not always stop it : they yielded at last with great reluctance, frequent rallies, and sullen submission ; and always inclined to revolt when Truth ceased to awe them by her immediate presence.

Truth, who, when she first descended from the heavenly palaces, expected to have been received by universal acclamation, cherished with kindness, heard with obedience, and invited to spread her influence from province to province, now found, that wherever she came, she must force her passage. Every intellect was precluded by Prejudice, and every heart pre-occupied by Passion. She, indeed, advanced, but she advanced slowly ; and often lost the conquests which she left behind her, by sudden insurrections of the Appetites, that shook off their allegiance, and ranged themselves again under the banner of her enemy.

Truth, however, did not grow weaker by the struggle, for her vigour was unconquerable ; yet she was provoked to see herself thus baffled and impeded by an enemy, whom she looked on with contempt, and who had no advantage but such as she owed to inconstancy, weakness, and artifice. She, therefore, in the anger of disappointment, called upon her father, Jupiter, to re-establish her in the skies, and leave mankind to the disorder and misery which they deserved, by submitting willingly to the usurpation of Falsehood.

*Jupiter* compassionated the world too much to

grant her request, yet was willing to ease her labours, and mitigate her vexation. He commanded her to consult the Muses by what methods she might obtain an easier reception, and reign without the toil of incessant war. It was then discovered, that she obstructed her own progress by the severity of her aspect, and the solemnity of her dictates; and that men would never willingly admit her, till they ceased to fear her, since, by giving themselves up to Falsehood, they seldom made any sacrifice of their ease or pleasure, because she took the shape that was most engaging, and always suffered herself to be dressed and painted by Desire. The Muses wove, in the loom of Pallas, a loose and changeable robe, like that in which Falsehood captivated her admirers; with this they invested Truth, and named her Fiction. She now went out again to conquer with more success; for when she demanded entrance of the Passions, they often mistook her for Falsehood, and delivered up their charge: but when she had once taken possession, she was soon disrobed by Reason, and shone out, in her original form, with native effulgence and resistless dignity.

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No. 97. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1751.

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*Fœcunda culpæ secula, nuptias  
Primum inquinavère, et genus, et domos,  
Hoc fonte derivata clades  
In patriam populumque fluxit.*

HOB. CAR. iii. 6. 17.

*Fruitful of crimes, this age first stain'd  
Their hapless offspring, and profan'd*

The nuptial bed; from whence the woes  
Which various and unnumber'd rose  
From this polluted fountain head,  
O'er Rome, and o'er the nations spread.

FRANCIS.

THE reader is indebted for this day's entertainment to an author from whom the age has received greater favours, who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ WHEN the Spectator was first published in single papers, it gave me so much pleasure, that it is one of the favourite amusements of my age to recollect it; and when I reflect on the foibles of those times, as described in that useful work, and compare them with the vices now reigning among us, I cannot but wish that you would oftener take cognizance of the manners of the better half of the human species, that if your precepts and observations be carried down to posterity, the Spectators may show to the rising generation what were the fashionable follies of their grandmothers, the Rambler of their mothers, and that from both they may draw instruction and warning.

“ When I read those Spectators which took notice of the misbehaviour of young women at church, by which they vainly hope to attract admirers, I used to pronounce such forward young women Seekers, in order to distinguish them by a mark of infamy from those who had patience and decency to stay till they were sought.

“ *But I have lived to see such a change in the manners of women, that I would now be willing to com-*

pound with them for that name, although I then thought it disgraceful enough, if they would deserve no worse ; since now they are too generally given up to negligence of domestic business, to idle amusements, and to wicked rackets, without any settled view at all but of squandering time.

“ In the time of the Spectator, excepting sometimes an appearance in the ring, sometimes at a good and chosen play, sometimes on a visit at the house of a grave relation, the young ladies contented themselves to be found employed in domestic duties ; for then routs, drums, balls, assemblies, and such like markets for women, were not known.

“ Modesty and diffidence, gentleness and meekness, were looked upon as the appropriate virtues and characteristic graces of the sex. And if a forward spirit pushed itself into notice, it was exposed in print as it deserved.

“ The churches were almost the only places where single women were to be seen by strangers. Men went thither expecting to see them, and perhaps too much for that only purpose.

“ But some good often resulted, however improper might be their motives. Both sexes were in the way of their duty. The man must be abandoned, indeed, who loves not goodness in another ; nor were the young fellows of that age so wholly lost to a sense of right, as pride and conceit have since made them affect to be. When, therefore, they saw a fair one, whose decent behaviour and cheerful piety showed her earnest in her first duties, they had the less doubt, judging politically only, that she would have a conscientious regard to her second.

“ With what ardour have I seen watched for, the rising of a kneeling beauty ; and what additional charms has devotion given to her recommunicated features ?

“ The men were often the better for what they heard. Even a Saul was once found prophesying among the prophets whom he had set out to destroy. To a man thus put into good humour by a pleasing object, religion itself looked more amiable. The men seekers of the Spectator’s time loved the holy place for the object’s sake, and loved the object for her suitable behaviour in it.

“ Reverence mingled with their love, and they thought that a young lady of such good principles must be addressed only by the man who at least made a show of good principles, whether his heart was yet quite right or not.

“ Nor did the young lady’s behaviour, at any time of the service, lessen this reverence. Her eyes were her own, her ears the preacher’s. Women are always most observed when they seem themselves least to observe, or to lay out for observation. The eye of a respectful lover loves rather to receive confidence from the withdrawn eye of the fair one, than to find itself obliged to retreat.

“ When a young gentleman’s affection was thus laudably engaged, he pursued its natural dictates; keeping, then, was a rare, at least a secret and scandalous vice, and a wife was the summit of his wishes. Rejection was now dreaded, and pre-engagement apprehended. A woman whom he loved, he was ready to think must be admired by all the world. His fears, his uncertainties, increased his love.

“ Every inquiry he made into the lady’s domestic excellence, which, when a wife is to be chosen, will surely not be neglected, confirmed him in his choice. He opens his heart to a common friend, and honestly discovers the state of his fortune. His friend applies to those of the young lady, whose parents, if *they approve his proposals, disclose them to their daughter.*

“ She, perhaps, is not an absolute stranger to the passion of the young gentleman. His eyes, his assiduities, his constant attendance at a church, whither, till of late, he used seldom to come, and a thousand little observances that he paid her, had very probably first forced her to regard, and then inclined her to favour him.

“ That a young lady should be in love, and the love of the young gentleman undeclared, is an heterodoxy which prudence, and even policy, must not allow. But thus applied to, she is all resignation to her parents. Charming resignation, which inclination opposes not.

“ Her relations applaud her for her duty : friends meet ; points are adjusted ; delightful perturbations, and hopes, and a few lover’s fears, fill up the tedious space, till an interview is granted ; for the young lady had not made herself cheap at public places.

“ The time of interview arrives. She is modestly reserved ; he is not confident. He declares his passion ; the consciousness of her own worth, and his application to her parents, take from her any doubt of his sincerity ; and she owns herself obliged to him for his good opinion. The inquiries of her friends into his character have taught her that his good opinion deserves to be valued.

“ She tacitly allows of his future visits ; he renews them ; the regard of each for the other is confirmed ; and when he presses for the favour of her hand, he receives a declaration of an entire acquiescence with her duty, and a modest acknowledgement of esteem for him.

“ He applies to her parents, therefore, for a near day ; and thinks himself under obligation to them for the cheerful and affectionate manner with which they receive his agreeable application.



“ With this prospect of future happiness, the marriage is celebrated. Gratulations pour in from every quarter. Parents and relations on both sides, brought acquainted in the course of the courtship, can receive the happy couple with countenances illumined, and joyful hearts.

“ The brothers, the sisters, the friends of one family, are the brothers, the sisters, the friends of the other. Their two families thus made one, are the world to the young couple.

“ Their home is the place of their principal delight, nor do they ever occasionally quit it but they find the pleasure of returning to it augmented in proportion to the time of their absence from it.

“ Oh, MR. RAMBLER! forgive the talkativeness of an old man! When I courted and married my Lætitia, then a blooming beauty, every thing passed just so! But how is the case now? The ladies, maidens, wives, and widows, are engrossed by places of open resort and general entertainment, which fill every quarter of the metropolis, and being constantly frequented, make home irksome. Breakfasting-places, dining-places; routs, drums, concerts, balls, plays, operas, masquerades for the evening, and even for all night; and, lately, public sales of the goods of broken housekeepers, which the general dissoluteness of manners has contributed to make very frequent, come in as another seasonable relief to those modern time-killers.

“ In the summer there are in every country-town assemblies; Tunbridge, Bath, Cheltenham, Scarborough! What expense of dress and equipage is required to qualify the frequenters for such emulous appearance?

“ By the natural infection of example, the lowest people have places of sixpenny resort, and gaming-

tables for pence. Thus servants are now induced to fraud and dishonesty, to support extravagance, and supply their losses.

“As to the ladies who frequent those public places, they are not ashamed to show their faces wherever men dare go, nor blush to try who shall stare most impudently, or who shall laugh loudest on the public walks.

“The men who would make good husbands, if they visit those places, are frightened at wedlock, and resolve to live single, except they are bought at a very high price. They can be spectators of all that passes, and, if they please, more than spectators, at the expense of others. The companion of an evening, and the companion for life, require very different qualifications.

“Two thousand pounds in the last age, with a domestic wife, would go further than ten thousand in this. Yet settlements are expected, that often, to a mercantile man especially, sink a fortune into uselessness; and pin-money is stipulated for, which makes a wife independent, and destroys love, by putting it out of a man's power to lay any obligation upon her, that might engage gratitude, and kindle affection. When to all this the card-tables are added, how can a prudent man think of marrying.

“And when the worthy men know not where to find wives, must not the sex be left to the foplings, the coxcombs, the libertines of the age, whom they help to make such? And need even these wretches marry to enjoy the conversation of those who render their company so cheap?

“And what, after all, is the benefit which the gay coquette obtains by her flutters? As she is ap-

proachable by every man, without requiring, I will not say incense or adoration, but even common complaisance, every fop treats her as upon the level, looks upon her light airs as invitations, and is on the watch to take the advantage: she has companions, indeed, but no lovers; for love is respectful and timorous; and where among all her followers will she find a husband?

“Set, dear Sir, before the youthful, the gay, the inconsiderate, the contempt as well as the danger to which they are exposed. At one time or other, women, not utterly thoughtless, will be convinced of the justice of your censure, and the charity of your instruction.

“But should your expostulations and reproofs have no effect upon those who are far gone in fashionable folly, they may be retailed from their mouths to their nieces, marriage will not often have entitled these to daughters, when they, the meteors of a day, find themselves elbowed off the stage of vanity by other flutterers; for the most admired women cannot have many Tunbridge, many Bath seasons to blaze in; since even fine faces, often seen, are less regarded than new faces, the proper punishment of showy girls, for rendering themselves so impolitically cheap.

“I am, SIR,

“Your sincere admirer,” &c.

No. 98. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1751.

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— *Quæ nec Sarmentus iniquas  
Cæsaris ad mensas, nec vilis Galba tulisset.*

JUV. SAT. V. 3.

Which not Sarmentus brook'd at Cæsar's board,  
Nor grov'ling Galba from his haughty lord.

ELPHINSTON.

“ TO THE AUTHOR OF THE RAMBLER.

“ MR. RAMBLER,

“ You have often endeavoured to impress upon your readers an observation of more truth than novelty, that life passes, for the most part, in petty transactions ; that our hours glide away in trifling amusements and slight gratifications ; and that there very seldom emerges any occasion that can call forth great virtue or great abilities.

“ It very commonly happens that speculation has no influence on conduct. Just conclusions, and cogent arguments, formed by laborious study, and diligent inquiry, are often repositied in the treasuries of memory, as gold in the miser's chest, useless alike to others and himself. As some are not richer for the extent of their possessions, others are not wiser for the multitude of their ideas.

“ You have truly described the state of human beings, but it may be doubted whether you have accommodated your precepts to your description ; whether you have not generally considered your readers as influenced by the tragic passions, and suscepti-

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ble of pain or pleasure only from powerful agents, and from great events.

“To an author who writes not for the improvement of a single art, or the establishment of a controverted doctrine, but equally intends the advantage, and equally courts the perusal of all the classes of mankind, nothing can justly seem unworthy of regard, by which the pleasure of conversation may be increased, and the daily satisfactions of familiar life secured from interruption and disgust.

“For this reason, you would not have injured your reputation, if you had sometimes descended to the minuter duties of social beings, and enforced the observance of those little civilities and ceremonious delicacies, which, inconsiderable as they may appear to the man of science, and difficult as they may prove to be detailed with dignity, yet contribute to the regulation of the world, by facilitating the intercourse between one man and another, and of which the French have sufficiently testified their esteem, by terming the knowledge and practice of them, *savoir vivre*, ‘the art of living’.

“Politeness is one of those advantages which we never estimate rightly but by the inconvenience of its loss. Its influence upon the manners is constant and uniform, so that, like an equal motion, it escapes perception. The circumstances of every action are so adjusted to each other, that we do not see where any error could have been committed, and rather acquiesce in its propriety, than admire its exactness.

“But as sickness shows us the value of ease, a little familiarity with those who were never taught to endeavour the gratification of others, but regulate their behaviour merely by their own will, will soon evince the necessity of established modes and formalities to the happiness and quiet of common life.

“ Wisdom and virtue are by no means sufficient, without the supplemental laws of good breeding, to secure freedom from degenerating to rudeness, or self-esteem from swelling into insolence ; a thousand incivilities may be committed, and a thousand offices neglected, without any remorse of conscience, or reproach from reason.

“ The true effect of genuine politeness seems to be rather ease than pleasure. The power of delighting must be conferred by nature, and cannot be delivered by precept, or obtained by imitation ; but though it be the privilege of a very small number to ravish and to charm, every man may hope by rules and caution not to give pain, and may, therefore, by the help of good-breeding, enjoy the kindness of mankind, though he should have no claim to higher distinctions.

“ The universal axiom in which all complaisance is included, and from which flow all the formalities which custom has established in civilized nations, is, ‘ That no man should give any preference to himself.’ A rule so comprehensive and certain, that, perhaps, it is not easy for the mind to image an incivility, without supposing it to be broken.

“ There are, indeed, in every place some particular modes of the ceremonial part of good-breeding, which being arbitrary and accidental, can be learned only by habitude and conversation ; such are the forms of salutation, the different gradations of reverence, and all the adjustments of praise and precedence. These, however, may be often violated without offence, if it be sufficiently evident, that neither malice nor pride contributed to the failure ; but will not atone, however rigidly observed, for the tumour of insolence, or petulance of contempt.

“ I have, indeed, not found among any part of mankind less real and rational complaisance than

among those who have passed their time in paying and receiving visits, in frequenting public entertainments, in studying the exact measures of ceremony, and in watching all the variations of fashionable courtesy.

“ They know, indeed, at what hour they may be at the door of an acquaintance, how many steps they must attend him towards the gate, and what interval should pass before his visit is returned ; but seldom extend their care beyond the exterior and unessential parts of civility, nor refuse their own vanity any gratification, however expensive to the quiet of another.

“ Trypherus is a man remarkable for splendour and expense ; a man, that having been originally placed by his fortune and rank in the first class of the community, has acquired that air of dignity, and that readiness in the exchange of compliments, which courts, balls, and levees, easily confer.

“ But Trypherus, without any settled purposes of malignity, partly by his ignorance of human nature, and partly by the habit of contemplating with great satisfaction his own grandeur and riches, is hourly giving disgust to those whom chance or expectation subject to his vanity.

“ To a man whose fortune confines him to a small house, he declaims upon the pleasure of spacious apartments, and the convenience of changing his lodging-room in different parts of the year ; tells him that he hates confinement ; and concludes, that if his chamber was less, he should never wake without thinking of a prison.

“ To Eucrates, a man of birth equal to himself, but of much less estate, he showed his services of plate, and remarked that such things were, indeed, nothing better than costly trifles, but that no man must pretend to the rank of a gentleman without them ; and

that for his part, if his estate was smaller, he should not think of enjoying but increasing it, and would inquire out a trade for his eldest son.

“ He has, in imitation of some more acute observer than himself, collected a great many shifts and artifices by which poverty is concealed ; and among the ladies of small fortune, never fails to talk of frippery and slight silks, and the convenience of a general mourning.

“ I have been insulted a thousand times with a catalogue of his pictures, his jewels, and his rarities, which, though he knows the humble neatness of my habitation, he seldom fails to conclude by a declaration, that wherever he sees a house meanly furnished, he despises the owner’s taste, or pities his poverty.

“ This, Mr. Rambler, is the practice of Trypherus, by which he is become the terror of all who are less wealthy than himself, and has raised innumerable enemies without rivalry, and without malevolence.

“ Yet though all are not equally culpable with Trypherus, it is scarcely possible to find any man who does not frequently, like him, indulge his own pride by forcing others into a comparison with himself, when he knows the advantage is on his side, without considering that unnecessarily to obtrude unpleasing ideas, is a species of oppression ; and that it is little more criminal to deprive another of some real advantage, than to interrupt that forgetfulness of its absence which is the next happiness to actual possession.

“ I am, &c.

“ EUTROPIUS.”



No. 99. TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1751.

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*Scilicet ingenii aliqua est concordia junctis,  
Et servat studii fœdera quisque sui ;  
Rusticus agricolam, miles fera bella gerentem,  
Rectorem dubiæ navita puppis amat.*

OVID.

Congenial passions souls together bind,  
And ev'ry calling mingles with its kind ;  
Soldier unites with soldier, swain with swain,  
The mariner with him that roves the main.

F. LEWIS.

It has been ordained by Providence, for the conservation of order in the immense variety of nature, and for the regular propagation of the several classes of life with which the elements are peopled, that every creature should be drawn by some secret attraction to those of his own kind ; and that not only the gentle and domestic animals which naturally unite into companies, or cohabit by pairs, should continue faithful to their species ; but even those ravenous and ferocious savages which Aristotle observes never to be gregarious, should range mountains and deserts in search of one another, rather than pollute the world with a monstrous birth.

As the perpetuity and distinction of the lower tribes of the creation require that they should be determined to proper mates by some uniform motive of choice, or some cogent principle of instinct ; it is necessary, likewise, that man, whose wider capacity demands more gratifications, and who feels in himself *innumerable* wants, which a life of solitude cannot

supply, and innumerable powers to which it cannot give employment, should be led to suitable companions by particular influence; and among many beings of the same nature with himself, he may select some for intimacy and tenderness, and improve the condition of his existence, by superadding friendship to humanity, and the love of individuals to that of the species.

. Other animals are so formed, that they seem to contribute very little to the happiness of each other, and know neither joy, nor grief, nor love, nor hatred, but as they are urged by some desire immediately subservient either to the support of their own lives, or to the continuation of their race; they, therefore, seldom appear to regard any of the minuter discriminations which distinguish creatures of the same kind from one another.

But if man were to feel no incentives to kindness, more than his general tendency to congenial nature, Babylon or London, with all their multitudes, would have to him the desolation of a wilderness; his affections, not compressed into a narrower compass, would vanish like elemental fire, in boundless evaporation; he would languish in perpetual insensibility, and though he might, perhaps, in the first vigour of youth, amuse himself with the fresh enjoyments of life, yet, when curiosity should cease, and alacrity subside, he would abandon himself to the fluctuations of chance, without expecting help against any calamity, or feeling any wish for the happiness of others.

To love all men is our duty, so far as it includes a general habit of benevolence, and readiness of occasional kindness; but to love all equally is impossible; at least impossible without the extinction of those passions which now produce all our pains and all our pleasures; without the disuse, if not the abolition, of

some of our faculties, and the suppression of all our hopes and fears in apathy and indifference.

The necessities of our condition require a thousand offices of tenderness, which mere regard for the species will never dictate. Every man has frequent grievances which only the solicitude of friendship will discover and remedy, and which would remain for ever unheeded in the mighty heap of human calamity, were it only surveyed by the eye of general benevolence equally attentive to every misery.

The great community of mankind is, therefore, necessarily broken into smaller independent societies; these form distinct interests, which are too frequently opposed to each other, and which they who have entered into the league of particular governments, falsely think it virtue to promote, however destructive to the happiness of the rest of the world.

Such unions are again separated into subordinate classes and combinations, and social life is perpetually branched out into minuter subdivisions, till it terminates in the last ramifications of private friendship.

That friendship may at once be fond and lasting, it has been already observed in these papers, that a conformity of inclinations is necessary. No man can have much kindness for him by whom he does not believe himself esteemed, and nothing so evidently proves esteem as imitation.

That benevolence is always strongest which arises from participation of the same pleasures, since we are naturally most willing to revive in our minds the memory of persons with whom the idea of enjoyment is connected.

It is commonly, therefore, to little purpose, that any one endeavours to ingratiate himself with such *as he cannot accompany in their amusements and diversions.* Men have been known to rise to favour

and to fortune, only by being skilful in the sports with which their patron happened to be delighted, by concurring with his taste for some particular species of curiosities, by relishing the same wine, or applauding the same cookery.

Even those whom wisdom or virtue have placed above regard to such petty recommendations, must nevertheless be gained by similitude of manners. The highest and noblest enjoyment of familiar life, the communication of knowledge and reciprocation of sentiments, must always presuppose a disposition to the same inquiry, and delight in the same discoveries.

With what satisfaction could the politician lay his schemes for the reformation of laws, or his comparisons of different forms of government, before the chymist, who has never accustomed his thoughts to any other object than salt and sulphur ; or how could the astronomer, in explaining his calculations and conjectures, endure the coldness of a grammarian, who would lose sight of Jupiter and all his satellites, for a happy etymology of an obscure word, or a better explication of a controverted line.

Every man loves merit of the same kind with his own, when it is not likely to hinder his advancement or his reputation ; for he not only best understands the worth of those qualities which he labours to cultivate, or the usefulness of the art which he practises with success, but always feels a reflected pleasure from the praises which, though given to another, belong equally to himself.

There is, indeed, no need of research and refinement to discover that men must generally select their companions from their own state of life, since there are not many minds furnished for great variety of conversation, or adapted to multiplicity of intellectual entertainments.

The sailor, the academic, the lawyer, the mechanic, and the courtier, have all a cast of talk peculiar to their own fraternity, have fixed their attention upon the same events, have been engaged in affairs of the same sort, and make use of allusions and illustrations which themselves only can understand.

To be infected with the jargon of a particular profession, and to know only the language of a single rank of mortals, is indeed sufficiently despicable. But as limits must be always set to the excursions of the human mind, there will be some study which every man more zealously prosecutes, some darling subject on which he is principally pleased to converse; and he that can most inform or best understand him, will certainly be welcomed with particular regard.

Such partiality is not wholly to be avoided, nor is it culpable, unless suffered so far to predominate as to produce aversion from every other kind of excellence, and to shade the lustre of dissimilar virtues. Those, therefore, whom the lot of life has conjoined, should endeavour constantly to approach towards the inclination of each other, invigorate every motion of concurring desire, and fan every spark of kindred curiosity.

It has been justly observed, that discord generally operates in little things; it is inflamed to its utmost vehemence by contrariety of taste, oftener than of principles; and might, therefore, commonly be avoided by innocent conformity, which, if it was not at first the motive, ought always to be the consequence of indissoluble union.

## No. 100. SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1751.

*Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico  
Tangit; et admissus circum præcordia ludit.*

PERS. SAT. i. 116.

Horace, with sly insinuating grace,  
Laugh'd at his friend, and look'd him in the face;  
Would raise a blush where secret vice he found,  
And tickle while he gently probed the wound.  
With seeming innocence the crowd beguiled;  
But made the desp'rate passes when he smiled.

DRYDEN.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ As very many well-disposed persons, by the unavoidable necessity of their affairs, are so unfortunate as to be totally buried in the country, where they labour under the most deplorable ignorance of what is transacting among the polite part of mankind, I cannot help thinking, that, as a public writer, you should take the case of these truly compassionate objects under your consideration.

“ These unhappy languishers in obscurity should be furnished with such accounts of the employments of people of the world, as may engage them in their several remote corners to a laudable imitation; or at least, so far inform and prepare them, that, if by any joyful change of situation they should be suddenly transported into the gay scene, they may not gape, and wonder, and stare, and be utterly at a loss how to behave and make a proper appearance in it.

“ It is inconceivable how much the welfare of all the country towns in the kingdom might be promoted, if you would use your charitable endeavours to raise in them a noble emulation of the manners and customs of higher life,

“ For this purpose, you should give a very clear and ample description of the whole set of polite acquirements ; a complete history of forms, fashions, frolics, of routs, drums, hurricanes, balls, assemblies, ridottos, masquerades, auctions, plays, operas, puppet-shows, and bear-gardens : of all those delights which profitably engage the attention of the most sublime characters, and by which they have brought to such amazing perfection the whole art and mystery of passing day after day, week after week, and year after year, without the heavy assistance of any one thing that formal creatures are pleased to call useful and necessary.

“ In giving due instructions through what steps to attain this summit of human excellence, you may add such irresistible arguments in its favour, as must convince numbers, who, in other instances, do not seem to want natural understanding, of the unaccountable error of supposing they were sent into the world for any other purpose but to flutter, sport, and shine. For, after all, nothing can be clearer than that an everlasting round of diversion, and the more lively and hurrying the better, is the most important end of human life.

“ It is really prodigious, so much as the world is improved, that there should, in these days, be persons so ignorant and stupid as to think it necessary to mispend their time, and trouble their heads about any thing else than pursuing the present fancy ; for what else is worth living for ?

“ *It is time enough surely to think of consequences when they come ; and as for the antiquated notions*

of duty, they are not to be met with in any French novel, or any book one ever looks into, but derived almost wholly from the writings of authors who lived a vast many ages ago, and who, as they were totally without any idea of those accomplishments which now characterize people of distinction, have been for some time sinking apace into utter contempt. It does not appear that even their most zealous admirers, for some partisans of his own sort every writer will have, can pretend to say they were ever at one ridotto.

“ In the important article of diversions, the ceremonial of visits, the ecstatic delight of unfriendly intimacies, and unmeaning civilities, they are absolutely silent. Blunt truth, and downright honesty, plain clothes, staying at home, hard work, few words, and those unenlivened with censure or double meaning, are what they recommend as the ornaments and pleasures of life. Little oaths, polite dissimulation, tea-table scandal, delightful indolence, the glitter of finery, the triumph of precedence, the enchantments of flattery, they seem to have had no notion of ; and I cannot but laugh to think what a figure they would have made in a drawing-room, and how frightened they would have looked at a gaming-table.

“ The noble zeal of patriotism that disdains authority, and tramples on laws for sport, was absolutely the aversion of these tame wretches.

“ Indeed, one cannot discover any one thing they pretend to teach people, but to be wise and good ; acquirements infinitely below the consideration of persons of taste and spirit, who know how to spend their time to so much better purpose.

“ Among other admirable improvements, pray, Mr. Rambler, do not forget to enlarge on the very extensive benefit of playing at cards on Sundays, a *practice of such infinite use*, that we may modestly



expect to see it prevail universally in all parts of this kingdom.

“To persons of fashion, the advantage is obvious ; because, as for some strange reason or other, which no fine gentleman or fine lady has yet been able to penetrate, there is neither play, nor masquerade, nor bottled conjuror, nor any other thing worth living for, to be had on a Sunday ; if it were not for the charitable assistance of whist, or bragg, the genteel part of mankind, must, one day in seven, necessarily suffer a total extinction of being.

“Nor are the persons of high rank the only gainers by so salutary a custom, which extends its good influence, in some degree, to the lower orders of people ; but were it quite general, how much better and happier would the world be than it is even now !

“’Tis hard upon poor creatures, be they ever so mean, to deny them those enjoyments and liberties which are equally open for all. Yet if servants were taught to go to church on this day, spend some part of it in reading, or receiving instruction in a family way, and the rest in mere friendly conversation, the poor wretches would infallibly take it into their heads, that they were obliged to be sober, modest, diligent, and faithful to their masters and mistresses.

“Now surely no one of common prudence or humanity would wish their domestics infected with such strange and primitive notions, or laid under such unmerciful restraints : all which may, in a great measure, be prevented by the prevalence of the good-humoured fashion that I would have you recommend. For when the lower kind of people see their betters, with a truly laudable spirit, insulting and flying in the face of those rude, ill-bred dictators, piety and the laws, they are thereby excited and admonished, *as far as actions can admonish and excite, and taught that they too have an equal right of setting them at*

defiance in such instances as their particular necessities and inclinations may require; and thus is the liberty of the whole human species mightily improved and enlarged.

“ In short, Mr. Rambler, by a faithful representation of the numberless benefits of a modish life, you will have done your part in promoting what every body seems to confess the true purpose of human existence, perpetual dissipation.

“ By encouraging people to employ their whole attention on trifles, and make amusement their sole study, you will teach them how to avoid many very uneasy reflections.

“ All the soft feelings of humanity, the sympathies of friendship, all natural temptations to the care of a family, and solicitude about the good or ill of others, with the whole train of domestic and social affections, which create such daily anxieties and embarrassments, will be happily stifled and suppressed in a round of perpetual delights; and all serious thoughts, but particularly that of hereafter, be banished out of the world; a most perplexing apprehension, but luckily a most groundless one too, as it is so very clear a case, that nobody ever dies.

“ I am, &c.

“ CHARIESSA.”

No. 101. TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1751.

*Mella jubes Hyblæa tibi, vel Hymettia nasci,  
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corsica ponis api?*

MART. EP. XI. 43.

Alas! dear Sir, you try in vain,  
Impossibilities to gain;  
No bee from Corsica's rank juice,  
Hyblæan honey can produce.

F. LEWIS.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ HAVING, by several years of continual study, treasured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained, by frequent exercise, the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readiness, I resolved to quit the university, where I considered myself as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the crowd of public life. I was naturally attracted by the company of those who were of the same age with myself, and, finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burlesque. Thus, in a short time, I had heated my imagination to such a state of activity and ebullition, that upon every occasion it fumed away in bursts of wit, and evaporations of gaiety. I became, on a sudden, the idol of the coffee-house, was in one winter solicited to accept the presidentship of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controversy upon theatrical merit; was in every public place surrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of resort my maxims and my jests, and was boasted as their intimate and companion by many, who had no other pretensions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the same room.

“ You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my success with some appearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of superiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred

by the powers of conversation, by extemporaneous sprightliness of fancy, copiousness of language, and fertility of sentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greater part of the praise is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, spreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleasure or advantage from the diffusion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal sovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himself, and enjoys all the pleasure which he bestows; he finds his power confessed by every one that approaches him, sees friendship kindling with rapture, and attention swelling into praise.

“ The desire which every man feels of importance and esteem, is so much gratified by finding an assembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladness and hushed with expectation, that the recollection of such distinctions can scarcely fail to be pleasing whensoever it is innocent. And my conscience does not reproach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity; since I always employed my influence on the side of virtue, and never sacrificed my understanding or my religion to the pleasure of applause.

“ There were many whom either the desire of enjoying my pleasantries, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company; but I was caressed in a particular manner by Demochares, a gentleman of a large estate, and a liberal disposition. My fortune being by no means exuberant, inclined me to be pleased with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became, by daily invitations, habituated to his table, and, as he believed my acquaintance necessary to the character of elegance, which he was desirous of establishing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence, without expense or dependence, and passed my life in a per-

petual reciprocation of pleasure, with men brought together by similitude of accomplishments, or desire of improvement.

“ But all power has its sphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. Demochares being called by his affairs into the county, imagined that he should increase his popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whose abilities were so generally allowed. The report presently spread through half the county that Demochares was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated Hilarius, by whom such merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpose for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for possible miscarriages, was pleased to find myself courted upon principles of interest, and considered as capable of reconciling factions, composing feuds, and uniting a whole province in social happiness.

“ After a few days spent in adjusting his domestic regulations, Demochares invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my presence was expected to heighten the pleasure of the feast. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raised in my favour, and represented the satisfaction with which he should see me kindle up the blaze of merriment, and should remark the various effects that my fire would have upon such diversity of matter.

“ This declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with solicitude. I felt an ambition of shining, which I never knew before ; and was therefore embarrassed with an unusual fear of disgrace. I passed the night in planning out to myself the conversation of the coming day ; recollected all my topics of raillery, proposed proper subjects of ridicule, prepared smart replies to a thou-

sand questions, accommodated answers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illustrations.

“ The morning broke at last in the midst of these busy meditations. I rose with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat ; and, notwithstanding all my efforts, found my spirits sunk under the weight of expectation. The company soon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to Hilarius. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed of a wit, I cannot yet discover ; but observed that they all seemed, after the regular exchange of compliments, to turn away disappointed ; and that while we waited for dinner, they cast their eyes first upon me, and then upon each other, like a theatrical assembly waiting for a show.

“ From the uneasiness of this situation, I was relieved by the dinner ; and as every attention was taken up by the business of the hour, I sunk quietly to a level with the rest of the company. But no sooner were the dishes removed, than, instead of cheerful confidence and familiar prattle, an universal silence again showed their expectation of some unusual performance. My friend endeavoured to rouse them by healths and questions, but they answered him with great brevity, and immediately relapsed into their former taciturnity.

“ I had waited in hope of some opportunity to divert them, but could find no pass open for a single sally ; and who can be merry without an object of mirth ? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither applause nor opposition, I was content to mingle with the mass, to put round the glass in silence, and solace myself with my own contemplation.

“ My friend looked round him ; the guests stared at one another ; and if now and then a few syllables

were uttered with timidity and hesitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleasing, and disposition to be pleased. Thus passed the hours to which so much happiness was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to Hilarius.

“ At last the night came on, and the necessity of parting freed us from the persecution of each other. I heard them, as they walked along the court, murmuring at the loss of a day, and inquiring whether any man would pay a second visit to a house haunted by a wit.

“ Demochares, whose benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the secondary honour which he was to gain by my sprightliness and elegance, and the affection with which he should be followed for a perpetual banquet of gaiety, was not able to conceal his vexation and resentment, nor would easily be convinced, that I had not sacrificed his interest to sullenness and caprice, had studiously endeavoured to disgust his guests, and suppressed my powers of delighting, in obstinate and premeditated silence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill-reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; some being of opinion, that my friend is deluded by an impostor, who, though he has found some art of gaining his favour, is afraid to speak before men of more penetration; and others concluding, that I think only London the proper theatre of my abilities, and disdain to exert my genius for the praise of rustics.

“ I believe, Mr. Rambler, that it has sometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune *to be celebrated* for wits, to fall under the same censures upon like occasions. I hope, therefore, that.

you will prevent any misrepresentations of such failures, by remarking, that invention is not wholly at the command of its possessor ; that the power of pleasing is very often obstructed by the desire ; that all expectation lessens surprise, yet some surprise is necessary to gaiety ; and that those who desire to partake of the pleasure of wit must contribute to its production, since the mind stagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flashes into transport, can be raised only by the infusion of dissimilar ideas."

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No. 102. SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1751.

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*Ipsa quoque assiduo labuntur tempora motu  
 Nan secus ac flumen : neque enim consistere flumen,  
 Nec levis hora potest ; sed ut unda impellitur undâ,  
 Urgeturque prior venienti, urgetque priorem,  
 Tempora sic fugiunt pariter, pariterque sequuntur.*

OID. MET. XV. 179.

With constant motion as the moments glide,  
 Behold, in running life, the rolling tide !  
 For none can stem by art, or stop by power,  
 The flowing ocean or the fleeting hour :  
 But wave by wave pursued, arrives on shore,  
 And each impell'd behind, impels before :  
 So time on time revolving we descry ;  
 So minutes follow, and so minutes fly.

ELPHINSTON.

‘ LIFE,’ says Seneca, ‘ is a voyage, in the progress of which we are perpetually changing our scenes ;



we first leave childhood behind us, then youth, then the years of ripened manhood, then the better and more pleasing part of old age.' The perusal of this passage having incited in me a train of reflections on the state of man, the incessant fluctuation of his wishes, the gradual change of his disposition to all external objects, and the thoughtlessness with which he floats along the stream of time, I sunk into a slumber amidst my meditations ; and on a sudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the shouts of alacrity, the shrieks of alarm, the whistle of winds, and the dash of waters.

My astonishment for a time repressed my curiosity ; but soon recovering myself so far as to inquire whither we were going, and what was the cause of such clamour and confusion, I was told that they were launching out into the ocean of life ; that we had already passed the streights of infancy, in which multitudes had perished, some by the weakness and fragility of their vessels, and more by the folly, perverseness, or negligence of those who undertook to steer them ; and that we were now on the main sea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means of security than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to choose among great numbers that offered their direction and assistance.

I then looked round with anxious eagerness ; and first turning my eyes behind me, saw a stream flowing through flowery islands, which every one that sailed along seemed to behold with pleasure ; but no sooner touched than the current, which, though not noisy or turbulent, was yet irresistible, bore him away. Beyond these islands all was darkness, nor could any of the passengers describe the shore at which he first embarked.

Before me, and on each side, was an expanse of waters violently agitated, and covered with so thick a mist, that the most perspicacious eye could see but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many sunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full sails, and insulting those whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and so thick the darkness, that no caution could confer security. Yet there were many, who, by false intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or, by violence, pushed those whom they found in their way against the rocks.

The current was invariable and insurmountable ; but though it was impossible to sail against it, or to return to the place that was once passed, yet it was not so violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, since, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

It was, however, not very common to steer with much care or prudence ; for by some universal infatuation, every man appeared to think himself safe, though he saw his consorts every moment sinking round him ; and no sooner had the waves closed over them, than their fate and misconduct were forgotten ; the voyage was pursued with the same jocund confidence ; every man congratulated himself upon the soundness of his vessel, and believed himself able to stem the whirlpool in which his friend was swallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was dashed : nor was it often observed that the sight of a wreck made any man change his course : if he turned aside for a moment, he soon forgot the rudder, and left himself again to the disposal of chance.

This negligence did not proceed from indifference,

or from weariness of their present condition ; for not one of those who thus rushed upon destruction, failed when he was sinking, to call loudly upon his associates for that help which could not now be given him ; and many spent their last moments in cautioning others against the folly by which they were intercepted in the midst of their course. Their benevolence was sometimes praised, but their admonitions were unregarded.

The vessels in which we had embarked being confessedly unequal to the turbulence of the stream of life, were visibly impaired in the course of the voyage ; so that every passenger was certain, that how long soever he might, by favourable accidents, or by incessant vigilance, be preserved, he must sink at last.

This necessity of perishing might have been expected to sadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at least to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the solace of their labours ; yet in effect none seemed less to expect destruction than those to whom it was most dreadful ; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themselves ; and those who knew their inability to bear the sight of the terrors that embarrassed their way, took care never to look forward, but found some amusement for the present moment, and generally entertained themselves by playing with Hope, who was the constant associate of the voyage of life.

Yet all that Hope ventured to promise, even to those whom she favoured most, was, not that they should escape, but that they should sink last ; and with this promise every one was satisfied, though he laughed at the rest for seeming to believe it. Hope,

indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions ; for, in proportion as their vessels grew leaky, she redoubled her assurances of safety ; and none were more busy in making provisions for a long voyage, than they whom all but themselves saw likely to perish soon by irreparable decay.

In the midst of the current of life was the gulph of Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interspersed with rocks, of which the pointed craigs were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease spread couches of repose, and with shades where Pleasure warbled the song of invitation. Within sight of these rocks all who sailed on the ocean of life must necessarily pass. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to steer the passengers through a narrow outlet by which they might escape ; but very few could, by her entreaties or remonstrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without stipulating that she should approach so near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might solace themselves with a short enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to pursue their course without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon so far by these promises, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of Intemperance, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the course of the vessel, and drew it, by insensible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat ; but the draught of the gulph was generally too strong to be overcome ; and the passenger, having danced in circles with a pleasing and giddy velocity, was at last overwhelmed and lost. Those few whom Reason was able to extricate, generally suffered so many shocks upon the points which shot out from the rocks of Pleasure, that they were unable to continue their

course with the same strength and facility as before, but floated along timorously and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and shattered by every ruffle of the water, till they sunk, by slow degrees, after long struggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others against the first approach to the gulph of Intemperance.

There were artists who professed to repair the breaches and stop the leaks of the vessels which had been shattered on the rocks of Pleasure. Many appeared to have great confidence in their skill, and some, indeed, were preserved by it from sinking, who had received only a single blow; but I remarked that few vessels lasted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artists themselves continued afloat longer than those who had least of their assistance.

The only advantage which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was that they sunk later, and more suddenly; for they passed forward till they had sometimes seen all those in whose company they had issued from the streights of infancy, perish in the way, and at last were overset by a cross breeze, without the toil of resistance, or the anguish of expectation. But such as had often fallen against the rocks of Pleasure, commonly subsided by sensible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and harassed themselves by labours that scarce Hope herself could flatter with success.

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was suddenly alarmed with an admonition from some unknown power, ‘Gaze not idly upon others when thou thyself art sinking. Whence is this thoughtless tranquillity, when thou and they are equally endangered?’ I looked, and seeing the gulph of Intemperance before me, started and awaked.

## No. 103. TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1751.

*Scire volunt secreta domûs, atque inde timeri.*

JUV. SAT. iii. 113.

They search the secrets of the house, and so  
Are worshipp'd there, and fear'd for what they know.

DRYDEN.

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intellect. Every advance into knowledge opens new prospects, and produces new incitements to further progress. All the attainments possible in our present state are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment ; conquest serves no purpose but that of kindling ambition, discovery has no effect but of raising expectation ; the gratification of one desire encourages another ; and after all our labours, studies, and inquiries, we are continually at the same distance from the completion of our schemes, have still some wish importunate to be satisfied, and some faculty restless and turbulent for want of its enjoyment.

The desire of knowledge, though often animated by extrinsic and adventitious motives, seems on many occasions to operate without subordination to any other principle ; we are eager to see and hear, without intention of referring our observations to a further end ; we climb a mountain for a prospect of the plain ; we run to the strand in a storm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water ; we range from city to city, though we profess neither architect-

ture nor fortification ; we cross seas only to view nature in nakedness, or magnificence in ruins ; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a desert or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude and every thing polished, every thing great and every thing little ; we do not see a thicket but with some temptation to enter it, nor remark an insect flying before us but with an inclination to pursue it.

This passion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. Lucan, therefore, introduces Cæsar speaking with dignity suitable to the grandeur of his designs and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high priest of Egypt, that he has no desire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the Nile, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a sight of those fountains which had been so long concealed. And Homer, when he would furnish the Sirens with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wisdom, might yield without disgrace, makes them declare, that none ever departed from them but with increase of knowledge.

There is, indeed, scarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to some use, or which may not at least gratify pride with occasional superiority ; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will find, that upon the first appearance of an object, or the first start of a question, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate discussion, precedes all thoughts of profit, or of competition ; and that his desires take wing by instantaneous impulse, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed, by subsequent considerations. The gratification of curiosity rather frees us from uneasiness than confers pleasure ; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by instruction. Curiosity *is the thirst of the soul* ; it inflames and torments

us, and makes us taste every thing with joy, however otherwise insipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earliest searchers after knowledge must have proposed knowledge only as their reward ; and that Science, though perhaps the nursling of Interest, was the daughter of Curiosity : for who can believe that they who first watched the course of the stars, foresaw the use of their discoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the mensuration of time ? They were delighted with the splendour of the nocturnal skies, they found that the lights changed their places ; what they admired they were anxious to understand, and in time traced their revolutions.

There are, indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear satisfied with their intellectual possessions, and seem to live without desire of enlarging their conceptions ; before whom the world passes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or by art.

This negligence is sometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant passion ; a lover finds no inclination to travel any path, but that which leads to the habitation of his mistress ; a trader can spare little attention to common occurrences when his fortune is endangered by a storm. It is frequently the consequence of a total immersion in sensuality : corporeal pleasures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happiness is obliterated : the mind, long habituated to a lethargic and quiescent state, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking ; and though she may sometimes be disturbed by the obtrusion of new ideas, shrinks back again to ignorance and rest.

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual task of procuring the supports of life denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of such as live without the ardour



of inquiry is very small, though many content themselves with cheap amusements, and waste their lives in researches of no importance.

There is no snare more dangerous to busy and excursive minds, than the cobwebs of petty inquisitiveness, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute studies, and detain them in a middle state, between the tediousness of total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with ease and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The necessity of doing something, and the fear of undertaking much, sinks the historian to a genealogist, the philosopher to a journalist of the weather, and the mathematician to a constructor of dials.

It is happy when those who cannot content themselves to be idle, nor resolve to be industrious, are at least employed without injury to others ; but it seldom happens that we can contain ourselves long in a neutral state, or forbear to sink into vice, when we are no longer soaring towards virtue.

Nugaculus was distinguished in his earlier years by an uncommon liveliness of imagination, quickness of sagacity, and extent of knowledge. When he entered into life, he applied himself with particular inquisitiveness to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of interest and ambition, and the various causes of miscarriage and success, both in public and private affairs.

Though his friends did not discover to what purpose all these observations were collected, or how Nugaculus would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an incessant attention to changes of countenance, bursts of inconsideration, sallies of passion, and all the other casualties by which he used to trace a character, yet they could not deny the study of

human nature to be worthy of a wise man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his discoveries, and listened with submissive modesty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakness of resolves, and the instability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of the ruling passion.

Such was the first incitement of Nugaculus to a close inspection into the conduct of mankind. He had no interest in view, and therefore no design of supplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expose them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himself, but has passed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every rising character, and lived upon a small estate without any thought of increasing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general master of secret history, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and stratagems, of half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's estate, the terms upon which every spendthrift raises his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure stipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childless acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every house, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his steward; he can tell where the manor-house is falling, though large sums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are felling woods without the consent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thousand acts of treachery. He sees no man's servant without draining him of his trust; he

enters no family without flattering the children into discoveries ; he is a perpetual spy upon the doors of his neighbours ; and knows by long experience, at whatever distance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

Nugaculus is not ill-natured, and, therefore, his industry has not hitherto been very mischievous to others, or dangerous to himself ; but since he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by discovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffic like the chymists, and purchase one secret with another ; he is every day more hated as he is more known ; for he is considered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happiness in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

Thus has an intention, innocent at first, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, by an accidental declension to minuteness, betrayed Nugaculus, not only to a foolish, but vicious waste of a life which might have been honourably passed in public services or domestic virtues. He has lost his original intention, and given up his mind to employments that engross, but do not improve it.

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No. 104. SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1751.

— *Nihil est, quod credere de se  
Non possit.*—

JUV. SAT. iv. 70.

None e'er rejects hyperboles of praise.

**THE** apparent insufficiency of every individual to his own happiness or safety, compels us to seek from one

another assistance and support. The necessity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extensive design, the variety of powers disseminated in the species, and the proportion between the defects and excellencies of different persons, demand an interchange of help and communication of intelligence, and, by frequent reciprocations of beneficence, unite mankind in society and friendship.

If it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a state of equality, without distinction of rank or peculiarity of possessions, it is reasonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his strength, or his skill, to the supply of natural wants; there was then little room for peevish dislike or capricious favour: the affection admitted into the heart was rather esteem than tenderness; and kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when, by force or policy, by wisdom or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemned to labour for the support of a few, then they whose possessions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure; and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create need which they might be courted to supply.

The desires of mankind are much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination much larger than actual enjoyment. Multitudes are, therefore, unsatisfied with their allotment; and he that hopes to improve his condition by the favour of another, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himself excelled by his rivals, will, by other expedients, endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the art of pleasing

among the most useful studies and most valuable acquisitions.

This art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its usefulness, and will always flourish most where it is most rewarded ; for this reason we find it practised with great assiduity under absolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who soon becomes so much accustomed to compliance and officiousness, as not easily to find, in the most delicate address, that novelty which is necessary to procure attention.

It is discovered by a very few experiments that no man is much pleased with a companion, who does not increase, in some respect, his fondness of himself ; and, therefore, he that wishes rather to be led forward to prosperity by the gentle hand of favour, than to force his way by labour and merit, must consider with more care how to display his patron's excellencies than his own ; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleasing dreams, and chase away disgust and weariness by a perpetual succession of delightful images.

This may, indeed, sometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really possessed, or upon prospects which reason spreads before hope ; for whoever can deserve or require to be courted, has generally either from nature or from fortune, gifts which he may review with satisfaction, and of which, when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will seldom be displeased.

But those who have once degraded their understanding to an application only to the passions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other sources than industry and virtue, seldom retain dignity and magnanimity sufficient to defend them *against the constant recurrence of temptation to false-*

hood. He that is too desirous to be loved, will soon learn to flatter, and when he has exhausted all the variations of honest praise, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new topics of panegyric, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himself.

The drudgeries of dependence would, indeed, be aggravated by hopelessness of success, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will obstinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deserves, will soon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compass of music. The greatest human virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourselves better than we are, and are generally desirous that others should think us still better than we think ourselves. To praise us for actions or dispositions, which deserve praise, is not to confer a benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretensions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be disputable, and which we are desirous to strengthen by a new suffrage; we have always hopes which we suspect to be fallacious, and of which we eagerly snatch at every confirmation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the first approaches under the conduct of truth, and to secure credit to future encomiums, by such praise as may be ratified by the conscience; but the mind once habituated to the lusciousness of eulogy, becomes, in a short time, nice and fastidious, and, like a vitiated palate, is incessantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is scarcely credible to what degree discernment may be dazzled by the mist of pride, and wisdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may descend by successive gradations of servility, and how swiftly it may fall down the pre-

cipice of falsehood. No man can, indeed, observe, without indignation, on what names, both of ancient and modern times, the utmost exuberance of praise has been lavished, and by what hands it has been bestowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppressor, the most hateful of the hateful, the most profligate of the profligate, have been denied any celebrations which they were willing to purchase, or that wickedness and folly have not found correspondent flatterers through all their subordinations, except when they have been associated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyrist.

As there is no character so deformed as to fright away from it the prostitutes of praise, there is no degree of encomiastic veneration which pride has refused. The emperors of Rome suffered themselves to be worshipped in their lives with altars and sacrifices; and in an age more enlightened, the terms peculiar to the praise and worship of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered those that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of justice, as disturbers of the peace of nature.

There are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who must be resigned to infamy without vindication, and whom we must confess to have deserted the cause of virtue for pay: they have committed, against full conviction, the crime of obliterating the distinctions between good and evil, and, instead of opposing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progress and celebrated her conquests. But there is a lower class of sycophants, whose understanding has *not made them capable of equal guilt.* Every man

of high rank is surrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims and his conduct ; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance, reconciles to all his vices and all his absurdities ; and who easily persuade themselves to esteem him, by whose regard they consider themselves as distinguished and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themselves within the sphere of greatness. Stupidity is soon blinded by the splendour of wealth, and cowardice is easily fettered in the shackles of dependence. To solicit patronage is, at least, in the event, to set virtue to sale. None can be pleased without praise, and few can be praised without falsehood ; few can be assiduous without servility, and none can be servile without corruption.

No. 105. TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1751.

— *Animorum*

*Impulsu, et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti.*

JUV. SAT. X. 350.

Vain man runs headlong, to caprice resign'd ;  
Impell'd by passion, and with folly blind.

I WAS lately considering, among other objects of speculation, the new attempt of an universal register, an office, in which every man may lodge an account of his superfluities and wants, of whatever he desires to purchase or to sell. My imagination soon presented to me the latitude to which this design may



be extended by integrity and industry, and the advantages which may be justly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation shall be so established, that neither reproach nor fraud shall be feared from it ; when an application to it shall not be censured as the last resource of desperation, nor its informations suspected as the fortuitous suggestions of men obliged not to appear ignorant. A place where every exuberance may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied, where every lawful passion may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction, where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation, must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstrucing school to the greatest masters of method and despatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrassment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulations, its conveniences, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber ; but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were passing without confusion ; every face on which I fixed my eyes, seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the displeasing state of an idler,

where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long-loved protectress, Curiosity. 'Great goddess,' said I, 'may thy votary be permitted to implore thy favour; if thou hast been my directress from the first dawn of reason, if I have followed thee through the maze of life with invariable fidelity, if I have turned to every new call, and quitted at thy nod one pursuit for another, if I have never stopped at the invitations of fortune, nor forgot thy authority in the bowers of pleasure, inform me now whither chance has conducted me.'

'Thou art now,' replied the smiling power, 'in the presence of Justice, and of Truth, whom the father of gods and men has sent down to register the demands and pretensions of mankind, that the world may at last be reduced to order, and that none may complain hereafter of being doomed to tasks for which they are unqualified, of possessing faculties for which they cannot find employment, or virtues that languish unobserved for want of opportunities to exert them, of being encumbered with superfluities which they would willingly resign, or of wasting away in desires which ought to be satisfied. Justice is now to examine every man's wishes, and Truth is to record them; let us approach and observe the progress of this great transaction.'

She then moved forward, and Truth, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the seat of Justice. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand,

demanded to be registered by Truth, as the Mæcenas of the present age, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or distress with certainty of succour. Justice very mildly inquired, whether he had calculated the expense of such a declaration? Whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would swarm about him? Whether he could distinguish idleness and negligence from calamity, ostentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To these questions he seemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his desire to be recorded a patron. Justice then offered to register his proposal on these conditions, that he should never suffer himself to be flattered; that he should never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he should never encourage followers without intending to reward them. These terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, said he, is the end of patronage, but the pleasure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in suspense, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to assiduity, and, at last, dismissing them for impatience? Justice heard his confession, and ordered his name to be posted upon the gate among cheats, and robbers, and public nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

Justice and Truth did not trouble this great adept with many inquiries; but finding his address awkward, and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be

registered as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required.

A man of a very grave and philosophic aspect, required notice to be given of his intention to set out a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price at which they might sail above water. His desire was granted, and he retired to a convenient stand, in expectation of filling his ship, and growing rich in a short time by the secrecy, safety, and expedition of the passage.

Another desired to advertise the curious, that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical instrument, by which those who laid out their industry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might observe the direction of the weathercocks on the hitherside of the lunar world.

Another wished to be known as the author of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a single fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle, by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation, without any inconvenience, till the water should subside. Justice considered these projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore scarcely condescended to examine them; but Truth refused to admit them into the register.

Twenty different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of Nestor. But Justice informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she would delay the notification till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

*A thousand other claims and offers were exhibit-*

ed and examined. I remarked, among this mighty multitude, that of intellectual advantages many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil; but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten thousands, that thought themselves entitled to a larger dividend.

It often happened that old misers, and women, married at the close of life, advertised their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring, to give notice of a son or daughter to be spared; but though appearances promised well on both sides, the bargain seldom succeeded; for they soon lost their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote some scheme of public charity: a thousand proposals were immediately made, among which they hesitated, till death precluded the decision.

As I stood looking on this scene of confusion, Truth condescended to ask me, what was my business at her office? I was struck with the unexpected question, and awaked by my efforts to answer it.

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## No. 106. SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1751.

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*Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat. CIC.*

Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.

**It is necessary to the success of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumstances or cha-**

racters, and enter the heart on that side where the passions stand ready to receive it. A lady seldom listens with attention to any praise but that of her beauty ; a merchant always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffic : and the author will scarcely be pleased without lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conspiracies against genius, and the slow progress of merit ; or some praises of the magnanimity of those who encounter poverty and contempt in the cause of knowledge, and trust for the reward of their labours to the judgement and gratitude of posterity.

An assurance of unfading laurels and immortal reputation is the settled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers. To raise monuments more durable than brass, and more conspicuous than pyramids, has been long the common boast of literature ; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themselves, far the greater part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to dispose them, see their edifices perish as they are towering to completion, and those few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and soon sink by the saps of time.

No place affords a more striking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a public library ; for who can see the wall crowded on every side by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate inquiry, now scarcely known but by the catalogue, and preserved only to increase the pomp of learning, without considering how many hours have been wasted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praises of futurity, how many statues have risen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often *wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his anta-*

gonists, and dogmatism has delighted in the gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power.

—*Non unquam dedit*

*Documenta fors majora, quam fragili loco  
Starent superbi.*

Insulting chance ne'er call'd with louder voice,  
On swelling mortals to be proud no more.

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are forgotten because they never deserved to be remembered, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgement or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagems of intrigue, or the civility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long inquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept up a while by the breadth of fashion, and then break at once, and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the Granvilles, Montagues, Stepneys, and Sheffields of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could be raised to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration.

Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay ; some rise more slowly, but last long. Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of present incidents or characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we discuss a question which every one is desirous to understand, which is debated in every assembly, and has divided the nation into parties ; or when we display the faults or virtues of him whose public conduct has made almost every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of such productions, all the motives of interest and vanity concur ; the disputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his passion, and every man is desirous to inform himself concerning affairs so vehemently agitated and variously represented.

It is scarcely to be imagined, through how many subordinations of interest the ardour of party is diffused, and what multitudes fancy themselves affected by every satire or panegyric on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occasion to mention him with praise or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, as he wishes to confirm his opinion, and to strengthen his party, will diligently peruse every paper from which he can hope for sentiments like his own. An object, however small in itself, if placed near to the eye, will engross all the rays of light ; and a transaction, however trivial, swells into importance when it presses immediately on our attention. He that shall peruse the political pamphlets of any past reign, will wonder why they were so eagerly read, or so loudly praised.



Many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confusion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critic; and the time is coming, when the compositions of later hirelings shall lie equally despised. In proportion as those who write on temporary subjects are exalted above their merit at first, they are afterwards depressed below it; nor can the brightest elegance of diction, or most artful subtilty of reasoning, hope for much esteem from those whose regard is no longer quickened by curiosity or pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertists, even when they contend for philosophical or theological truth, to be soon laid aside and slighted. Either the question is decided, and there is no more place for doubt and opposition; or mankind despair of understanding it, and grow weary of disturbance, content themselves with quiet ignorance, and refuse to be harassed with labours which they have no hopes of recompensing with knowledge.

The authors of new discoveries may surely expect to be reckoned among those whose writings are secure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the book in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy.

It is well known how much of our philosophy is derived from Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air; yet of those who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, revered; but his

works are neglected ; we are contented to know, that he conquered his opponents, without inquiring what cavils were produced against him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themselves to studies boundless and inexhaustible, as experiments and natural philosophy. These are always lost in successive compilations as new advances are made, and former observations become more familiar. Others spend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators, who are themselves overwhelmed by subsequent collectors, that equally destroy the memory of their predecessors by amplification, transposition, or contraction. Every new system of nature gives birth to a swarm of expositors, whose business is to explain and illustrate it, and who can hope to exist no longer than the founder of their sect preserves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of composition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully studied human nature, and can well describe it, may with most reason flatter his ambition. Bacon, among all his pretensions to the regard of posterity, seems to have pleased himself chiefly with his Essays, which come home to men's business and bosoms, and of which therefore, he declares his expectation, that they will live as long as books last. It may, however, satisfy an honest and benevolent mind to have been useful, though less conspicuous ; nor will he that extends his hopes to higher rewards, be so much anxious to obtain praise, as to discharge the duty which Providence assigns him.

No. 107. TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1751.

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*Alternis igitur contendere versibus ambo  
Cœpere : alternos musæ meminisse volebant.*

VIRG. ECL. vii. 18.

On themes alternate now the swains recite ;  
The muses in alternate themes delight.

ELPHINSTON.

AMONG the various censures which the unavoidable comparison of my performances, with those of my predecessors, has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of those changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhausted novelty, and of that intermixture of subjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved weariness, and awakened expectation.

I have, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and solemn subjects in the same paper, because it seems absurd for an author to counteract himself, to press at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, or give medicines, which, like the double poison of Dryden, destroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured sometimes to divert, and sometimes to elevate ; but have imagined it an useless attempt to disturb merriment by solemnity, or interrupt seriousness by drollery. Yet I shall this day publish two letters of very different tendency, which, I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to please even when they are not critically approved.

## " TO THE RAMBLER.

" DEAR SIR,

" THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleasure in listening to the conversation of learned men, especially when they discourse of things which I do not understand ; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many disputes about the alteration of the style, which, they say, is to be made by act of parliament.

" One day when my mamma was gone out of the room, I asked a very great scholar what the style was? He told me, he was afraid I should hardly understand him when he informed me, that it was the stated and established method of computing time. It was not, indeed, likely that I should understand him ; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we should be at so much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time past, or the time to come ; but I have considered them both by myself, and think it as foolish to count time that is gone, as money that is spent ; and as for the time which is to come, it only seems further off by counting ; and, therefore, when any pleasure is promised me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

" I have since listened very attentively to every one that talked upon this subject, of whom the greater part seem not to understand it better than myself ; for, though they often hint how much the nation has been mistaken, and rejoice that we are at last growing wiser than our ancestors, I have never been able to discover from them that any body has *died sooner* or been married later for counting time

wrong ; and, therefore, I began to fancy, that there was great bustle with little consequence.

“ At last, two friends of my papa, Mr. Cycle, and Mr. Starlight, being it seems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new style. Sweet Mr. Starlight—I am sure I shall love his name as long as I live ; for he told Cycle roundly, with a fierce look, that we should never be right without a year of confusion. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing so charming ? a whole year of confusion ! When there has been a rout at mamma’s, I have thought one night of confusion worth a thousand nights of rest ; and if I can but see a year of confusion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feast, and there a masquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and messages, and milliners, and raps at the door, and visits, and frolics, and new fashions, I shall not care what they do with the rest of the time, nor whether they count it by the old style or the new ; for I am resolved to break loose from the nursery in the tumult, and play my part among the rest ; and it will be strange if I cannot get a husband and a chariot in the year of confusion.

“ Cycle, who is neither so young nor so handsome as Starlight, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning ; and, indeed, if it should come only to this, I think the new style is a delightful thing ; for my mamma says I shall go to court when I am sixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of restraint will soon be at an end. It is strange, that, with all the plots that have been laid against time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or

interest, get them but for once to destroy eleven months, and then I shall be as old as some married ladies. But this is desired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. Starlight's scheme; for nothing surely could please me like a year of confusion, when I shall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen, and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-master one day, and the next for the music-master, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and spend all my time without tasks, and without account, and go out without telling whither, and come home without regard to prescribed hours, or family-rules.

"I am, SIR,

"Your humble servant,

"PROPERANTIA."

"MR. RAMBLER,

"I WAS seized this morning with an unusual pensiveness, and finding that books only served to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenness of the air and brightness of the sun.

"As I wandered, wrapped up in thought, my eyes were struck with the hospital for the reception of deserted infants, which I surveyed with pleasure, till, by a natural train of sentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what shelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which, perhaps, are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick must be the transition from deluded virtue to shameless guilt, and from shameless guilt to hopeless wretchedness!

"The anguish that I felt left me no rest till I had, by your means, addressed myself to the public on behalf of those forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whose misery here might satisfy the

most rigorous censor, and whose participation of our common nature might surely induce us to endeavour, at least, their preservation from eternal punishment.

“ These were all once, if not virtuous, at least innocent ; and might still have continued blameless and easy, but for the arts and insinuations of those whose rank, fortune, or education, furnished them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the situation of that woman, who, being forsaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the necessity of turning prostitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

“ It cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful course of life, with shame, horror, and regret ; but where can they hope for refuge ?

The world is not their friend, nor the world's law.

Their sighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their misery, and threaten them with want, or a gaol, if they show the least design of escaping from their bondage.

“ To ‘ wipe all tears from off all faces,’ is a task too hard for mortals ; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the most limited power : yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the most wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal disregard of policy and goodness.

“ There are places, indeed, set apart, to which these unhappy creatures may resort, when the diseases of incontinence seize upon them ; but if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced ? Either to return with the small remains of beauty to their former guilt, or perish in the streets with nakedness and hunger.

“How frequently have the gay and thoughtless, in their evening frolics, seen a band of these miserable females, covered with rags, shivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of those who, perhaps, first seduced them by caresses of fondness, or magnificence of promises, go on to reduce others to the same wretchedness by the same means?

“To stop the increase of this deplorable multitude is undoubtedly the first and most pressing consideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and severity are properly employed. But surely those whom passion or interest have already depraved, have some claim to compassion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themselves. Nor would they long groan in their present afflictions, if none were to refuse them relief, but those that owe their exemption from the same distress only to their wisdom and their virtue.

“I am, &c.

“AMICUS.”

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No. 108. SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 1751.

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— *Sapere aude,*

*Incipe. Vivendi rectè qui prorogat horam,  
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille  
Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.*

HOR. EPIST. i. 2. 40.



Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise ;  
He who defers this work from day to day,  
Does on a river's bank expecting stay,  
Till the whole stream which stopp'd him should be gone,  
That runs, and as it runs, for ever will run on.

COWLEY.

AN ancient poet, unreasonably discontented at the present state of things, which his system of opinions obliged him to represent in its worst form, has observed of the earth, ' That its greater part is covered by the uninhabitable ocean ; that of the rest some is encumbered with naked mountains, and some lost under barren sands ; some scorched with unintermitted heat, and some petrified with perpetual frost ; so that only a few regions remain for the production of fruits, the pasture of cattle, and the accommodation of man.'

The same observation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our present state. When we have deducted all that is absorbed in sleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irresistibly engrossed by the tyranny of custom ; all that passes in regulating the superficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the disposal of others ; all that is torn from us by the violence of disease, or stolen imperceptibly away by lassitude and languor ; we shall find that part of our duration very small of which we can truly call ourselves masters, or which we can spend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are lost in a rotation of petty cares, in a constant recurrence of the same employments ; many of our provisions for ease or happiness are always exhausted by the present day ; and a great part of our existence serves no other purpose than that of enabling us to enjoy the rest.

Of the few moments which are left in our disposal, it may reasonably be expected that we should be so

frugal, as to let none of them slip from us without some equivalent ; and, perhaps, it might be found, that as the earth, however straitened by rocks and waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to consume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental distraction, would yet afford us a large space vacant to the exercise of reason and virtue ; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances ; and that we squander much of our allowance, even while we think it sparing and insufficient.

This natural and necessary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us insensible of the negligence with which we suffer them to slide away. We never consider ourselves as possessed at once of time sufficient for any great design, and therefore indulge ourselves in fortuitous amusements. We think it unnecessary to take an account of a few supernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were exposed to a thousand chances of disturbance and interruption.

It is observable, that, either by nature or by habit, our faculties are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjust great things by divisions, and little things by accumulation. Of extensive surfaces we can only take a survey, as the parts succeed one another : and atoms we cannot perceive till they are united into masses. Thus we break the vast periods of time into centuries and years ; and thus if we would know the amount of moments, we must agglomerate them into days and weeks.

The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of fortune is by small expenses, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life ; he that hopes to

look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.

It is usual for those who are advised to the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themselves as required to change the general course of their conduct, to dismiss business, and exclude pleasure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that should steadily and resolutely assign to any science or language those interstitial vacancies which intervene in the most crowded variety of diversion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and discover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perseverance, than from violent efforts and sudden desires; efforts which are soon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and desires which, if they are indulged too often, will shake off the authority of reason, and range capriciously from one object to another.

The disposition to defer every important design to a time of leisure, and a state of settled uniformity, proceeds generally from a false estimate of the human powers. If we except those gigantic and stupendous intelligences who are said to grasp a system by intuition, and bound forward from one series of conclusions to another, without regular steps through intermediate propositions, the most successful students make their advances in knowledge by short flights, between each of which the mind may lie at rest. For every single act of progression a short time is sufficient; and it is only necessary that, whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

Few minds will be long confined to severe and laborious meditation; and when a successful attack on

knowledge has been made, the student recreates himself with the contemplation of his conquest, and forbears another incursion till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curiosity calls upon him for fresh gratifications. Whether the time of intermission is spent in company, or in solitude, in necessary business, or in voluntary levities, the understanding is equally abstracted from the object of inquiry ; but, perhaps, if it be detained by occupations less pleasing, it returns again to study with greater alacrity, than when it is glutted with ideal pleasures, and surfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not suffer himself to be discouraged by fancied impossibilities, may sometimes find his abilities invigorated by the necessity of exerting them in short intervals, as the force of a current is increased by the contraction of its channel.

From some cause like this it has probably proceeded, that, among those who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have risen to eminence in opposition to all the obstacles which external circumstances could place in their way, amidst the tumult of business, the distresses of poverty, or the dissipations of a wandering and unsettled state. A great part of the life of Erasmus was one continual peregrination ; ill supplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him ; he yet found means by unshaken constancy, and a vigilant improvement of those hours, which, in the midst of the most restless activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the same condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and solicitation, and so much versed in common life, that he has transmitted

to us the most perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world such application to books, that he will stand for ever in the first rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he sufficiently discovers, by informing us, that the Praise of Folly, one of his most celebrated performances, was composed by him on the road to Italy: *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit insidendum, illiteratis fabulis tereretur*, 'lest the hours which he was obliged to spend on horseback should be tattled away without regard to literature.'

An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that time was his estate; an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use.

No. 109. TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 1751.

*Gratum est, quod patriæ civem, populoque dedisti,  
Si facis ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris.  
Utilis et bellorum, et pacis rebus agendis.  
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu  
Moribus instituas.—*

JUV. SAT. XIV. 70.

Grateful the gift! a member to the state,  
If you that member useful shall create;

Train'd both to war, and when the war shall cease,  
As fond, as fit t'improve the arts of peace.  
For much it boots which way you train your boy,  
The hopeful object of your future joy.

ELPHINSTON:

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,  
“ THOUGH you seem to have taken a view sufficiently extensive of the miseries of life, and have employed much of your speculation on mournful subjects, you have not yet exhausted the whole stock of human infelicity. There is still a species of wretchedness which escapes your observation, though it might supply you with many sage remarks, and salutary cautions.

“ I cannot but imagine the start of attention awakened by this welcome hint ; and at this instant see the Rambler snuffing his candle, rubbing his spectacles, stirring his fire, locking out interruption, and settling himself in his easy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without disturbance. For, whether it be that continued sickness or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterness of being ; or that you imagine none but yourself able to discover what I suppose has been seen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world ; whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the public ; or fancy that you have some particular powers of dolorous declamation, and warble out your groans with uncommon elegance or energy ; it is certain, that, whatever be your subject, melancholy for the most part bursts in upon your speculation, your gaiety is quickly overcast, and though *your readers may be flattered with hopes of plea-*

santry, they are seldom dismissed but with heavy hearts.

“ That I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own syllables of sadness, I will inform you that I was condemned by some disastrous influence to be an only son, born to the apparent prospect of a large fortune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when satiety of common diversions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenseness. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feasts, and dances, and bagpipes; congratulations were sent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents discovered in my first cries such tokens of future virtue and understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happiness and the increase of their estate.

“ The abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouses, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time called in as auxiliaries against the intrusion of thought.

“ When there is such a parity between two persons associated for life, the dejection which the husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for want of superiority, sinks him to submissiveness. My mamma, therefore, governed the family without control; and except that my father still retained some authority in the stables, and now and then, after a supernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glass or china dish to prove his sovereignty, the whole course of the year was regulated by her direction, the servants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or dismissed at her discretion.

“ She therefore thought herself entitled to the superintendence of her son’s education ; and when my father, at the instigation of the parson, faintly proposed that I should be sent to school, very positively told him, that she would not suffer so fine a child to be ruined ; that she never knew any boys at a grammar school that could come into a room without blushing, or sit at the table without some awkward uneasiness ; that they were always putting themselves into danger by boisterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company ; and that, for her part, she would rather follow me to the grave, than see me tear my clothes, and hang down my head, and sneak about with dirty shoes and blotted fingers, my hair unpowdered, and my hat uncocked.

“ My father, who had no other end in his proposal than to appear wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my learning ; for, indeed, he had known very few students that had not some stiffness in their manner. They, therefore, agreed, that a domestic tutor should be procured, and hired an honest gentleman of mean conversation and narrow sentiments, but whom, having passed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by the utmost flexibility of submission to all my mother’s opinions and caprices. He frequently took away my book, lest I should mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally brushed my coat before he dismissed me into the parlour.

“ He had no occasion to complain of too burthensome an employment, for my mother very judiciously



considered that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and suffered me not to pass any more time in his apartment than my lesson required. When I was summoned to my task, she enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admonished not to lean on my chair, cross my legs, or swing my hands like my tutor: and once my mother very seriously deliberated upon his total dismissal, because I began, she said, to learn his manner of sticking on my hat, and had his bend in my shoulders, and his totter in my gait.

“ Such, however, was her care, that I escaped all these depravities ; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myself of every appearance of childish diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickness of my replies ; and many a scholar five years older than myself have I dashed into confusion by the steadiness of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

“ At fourteen I was completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, and I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a French loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery ; but as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in Brussels lace.

“ They next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. All received their partners from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart

now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

“ In a short time I came to London, and as my father was well known among the higher classes of life, soon obtained admission to the most splendid assemblies, and most crowded card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded : the ladies praised the fancy of my clothes, the beauty of my form, and the softness of my voice ; endeavoured in every place to force themselves to my notice ; and invited by a thousand oblique solicitations my attendance to the play-house, and my salutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmost extent of my conception ; I passed every morning in dress, every afternoon in visits, and every night in some select assemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were suffered to molest us.

“ After a few years, however, these delights became familiar, and I had leisure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of satiety, or recreate weariness by varied amusement ; and, therefore, endeavoured to enlarge the sphere of my pleasures, and to try what satisfaction might be found in the society of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man whose name I had heard mentioned with respect, received me with a kind of tenderness nearly bordering on compassion ; and that those whose reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their understandings by treating me with contempt. One of these witlings elevated his crest, by asking me in a full coffee-house the price of patches ; and another whispered that he wondered why Miss Frisk did not keep me that afternoon to watch her squirrel.

“ *When I found myself thus hunted from all mas-*

culine conversation by those who were themselves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and resolved to dedicate my life to their service and their pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay world, some are married, some have retired, and some have so much changed their opinion, that they scarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made my addresses suffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either use or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

“ I cannot but think, Mr. Rambler, that I have reason to complain ; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy, have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find, that though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

“ I am, &c.

“ FLORENTULUS.”

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No. 110. SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1751.

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*At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum  
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex.*

*Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris.  
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vite,  
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.*

PRUDENTIUS.

We through this maze of life one Lord obey ;  
Whose light and grace unerring, lead the way.  
By hope and faith secure of future bliss,  
Gladly the joys of present life we miss :  
For baffled mortals still attempt in vain,  
Present and future bliss at once to gain.

F. LEWIS.

**THAT** to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed ; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated the duties prescribed to them, the fear of being rejected, or punished by God, has always burthened the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, therefore, constitutes a large part of every religion.

The various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have dictated, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least show the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the placability of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion ; for though the knowledge of His existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of His mercy, it would have little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever ; and every man would naturally withdraw his *thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom*

he must consider as a governor too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified ; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

Where there is no hope, there can be no endeavour. A constant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terrestrial diligence ; and therefore the progress of life could only have been the natural descent of negligent despair from crime to crime, had not the universal persuasion of forgiveness to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation, recalled those to the paths of virtue whom their passions had solicited aside ; and animated to new attempts and firmer perseverance, those whom difficulty had discouraged, or negligence surprised.

In times and regions so disjoined from each other, that there can scarcely be imagined any communication of sentiments, either by commerce or tradition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal austerities, of anticipating His vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeasing His justice by a speedy and cheerful submission to a less penalty when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel some inclination towards exterior acts and ritual observances. Ideas not represented by sensible objects are fleeting, variable, and evanescent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by some certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once establish the necessary proportion between crimes and sufferings, might securely rest upon his performance of the expiation ; but while safety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid lest he should *decide too soon* in his own favour, lest he should not

have felt the pangs of true contrition ; lest he should mistake satiety for detestation, or imagine that his passions are subdued when they are only sleeping.

From this natural and reasonable diffidence arose, in humble and timorous piety, a disposition to confound penance with repentance, to repose on human determinations, and to receive from some judicial sentence the stated and regular assignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without resource : we seek in the knowledge of others a succour for our own ignorance, and are ready to trust any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain, by some outward marks, the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence ; and these rules, corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from the conviction that it has offended God. Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts of repentance ; yet they are too closely connected with it to be easily separated ; for they not only mark its sincerity, but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his safety or happiness in this world is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to impute to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. Danger considered as imminent, naturally produces such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror is every moment seized with useless anxieties, adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting for security; what can he judge of himself, but that he is not yet awakened to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation?

Retirement from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions: and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary

movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure, is doubtless necessary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miscarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only question in which mistake cannot be rectified.

Austerities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and roused, by which the attractions of pleasure are interrupted, and the chains of sensuality are broken. It is observed by one of the Fathers, that he who restrains himself in the use of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden. Abstinence, if nothing more, is at least a cautious retreat from the utmost verge of permission, and confers that security which cannot be reasonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of destruction, or delights to approach the pleasures which he knows it fatal to partake. Austerity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diseases of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we should readily have recourse, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and sum of repentance is a change of life. That sorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our escape, that austerity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But sorrow and terror must naturally precede reformation; for what other cause can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himself alarmed by his conscience, anxious for the attainment of a better state, and afflicted by the memory of his past faults, may justly conclude that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope, by retirement and prayer,



the natural and religious means of strengthening his conviction, to impress upon his mind such a sense of the divine presence, as may overpower the blandishments of secular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holiness to another, till death shall set him free from doubt and contest, misery and temptation.

What better can we do than—prostrate fall  
Before Him reverent; and there confess  
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears  
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air  
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign  
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

MILTON'S P. L. X. 1086.

No. 111. TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1751.

Φρονεῖν γὰρ οἱ ταχὺς οὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς.

SOPHOC.

Disaster always waits on early wit.

It has been observed, by long experience, that late springs produce the greatest plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is, for the most part, liberally recompensed by the exuberance and fecundity of the ensuing seasons; the blossoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the sun is high, escape those chilling blasts and nocturnal frosts which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the first smiles of vernal

beauty, destroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the germ, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I am afraid there is little hope of persuading the young and sprightly part of my readers, upon whom the spring naturally forces my attention, to learn from the great process of nature the difference between diligence and hurry, between speed and precipitation; to prosecute their designs with calmness, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprise and hope; having yet no occasion of comparing our force with any opposing power, we naturally form presumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obstruction and impediment will give way before us. The first repulses rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it suspects its own weakness, or submits to sap the difficulties which it expected to subdue by storm. Before disappointments have enforced the dictates of philosophy, we believe it in our power to shorten the interval between the first cause and the last effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding industry, and fancy that, by increasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of our schemes, and a long enjoyment of our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment; we pluck every gratification within our reach, without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and crowd all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass; but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of *life to steal from us in languid preparations for fu-*

ture undertakings, or slow approaches to remote advantages, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel. Whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition, and found them delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that death shocks them more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid to remind themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is past.

“ A perpetual conflict with natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age we must labour to recall the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

“ The torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be borne, at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet since the fear of missing what we seek, must always be proportionable to the happiness expected from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the hazard of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often raises his character

by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The danger of early eminence has been extended, by some, even to the gifts of nature ; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgement, or extent of knowledge, appearing before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits ; but have observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the even and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It frequently happens that applause abates diligence. Whosoever finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, will be contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sit down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, quickly claims the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy ; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth, to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished, and admired, easily seduces the student from literary solitude. He is

ready to follow the call which summons him to hear his own praise, and which, perhaps, at once flatters his appetite with certainty of pleasures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleasures which he conceives instantaneous, and hopes which he has not yet learned to distrust.

These evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or considered as inseparable from an early display of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly escaped by prudence and resolution, and must therefore be recounted rather as consolations to those who are less liberally endowed, than as discouragements to such as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the persecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raise the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modesty have made most eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniences of an amiable form? or would have purchased safety by the loss of charms?

Neither grace of person, nor vigour of understanding, are to be regarded otherwise than as blessings, as means of happiness indulged by the Supreme Benefactor; but the advantages of either may be lost by too much eagerness to obtain them. A thousand beauties in their first blossom, by an imprudent exposure to the open world, have suddenly withered at the blast of infamy; and men who might have subjected new regions to the empire of learning, have been lured by the praise of their first productions from academical retirement, and wasted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too soon aspires to celebrity and conquest perishes by childish vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltless indiscretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited,

and loses those years which might have been most usefully employed ; the years of youth, of spirit, and vivacity.

It is one of the innumerable absurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction than in that part of life when we need it most ; we are in haste to meet enemies whom we have not strength to overcome, and to undertake tasks which we cannot perform ; and as he that once miscarries does not easily persuade mankind to favour another attempt, an ineffectual struggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obscurity.

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No. 112. SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1751.

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*In mea vesanas habui dispendia vires,  
Et valui poenas fortis in ipse meas.*

OVID.

Of strength pernicious to myself I boast ;  
The powers I have were given me to my cost.

F. LEWIS.

WE are taught by Celsus, that health is best preserved by avoiding settled habits of life, and deviating sometimes into slight aberrations from the laws of medicine ; by varying the proportions of food and exercise, interrupting the successions of rest and labour, and mingling hardships with indulgence. The body, long accustomed to stated quantities and uniform periods, is disordered by the smallest irregularity ; and since we cannot adjust every day by the

balance or barometer, it is fit sometimes to depart from rigid accuracy, that we may be able to comply with necessary affairs, or strong inclinations. He that too long observes nice punctualities, condemns himself to voluntary imbecility, and will not long escape the miseries of disease.

The same laxity of regimen is equally necessary to intellectual health, and to a perpetual susceptibility of occasional pleasure. Long confinement to the same company, which perhaps similitude of taste brought first together, quickly contracts his faculties, and makes a thousand things offensive that are in themselves indifferent ; a man accustomed to hear only the echo of his own sentiments, soon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general gratifications of mankind.

In things which are not immediately subject to religious or moral consideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Sensibility may, by an incessant attention to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderness inconsistent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the smallest asperity, and vulnerable by the gentlest touch. He that pleases himself too much with minute exactness, and submits to endure nothing in accommodations, attendance, or address, below the point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the crowd of life, be harassed with innumerable distresses, from which those who have not in the same manner increased their sensations find no disturbance. His exotic softness will shrink at the coarseness of vulgar felicity, like a plant transplanted to northern nurseries from the dews and sunshine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence ; and, therefore, if we allow not ourselves to be satisfied while we can perceive any error or defect, we must refer our hopes of ease

to some other period of existence. It is well known, that, exposed to a microscope, the smoothest polish of the most solid bodies discovers cavities and prominences, and that the softest bloom of roseate virginity repels the eye with excrescences and discolorations. The perceptions as well as the senses may be improved to our own disquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of dislike, raise in time an artificial fastidiousness, which shall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, show us the naked skeleton of every delight, and present us only with the pains of pleasure, and the deformities of beauty.

Peevishness, indeed, would perhaps very little disturb the peace of mankind, were it always the consequence of superfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to destroy happiness by art and refinement. But by continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by long enjoyment of undisputed superiority, the dull and thoughtless may likewise acquire the power of tormenting themselves and others, and become sufficiently ridiculous or hateful to those who are within sight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

They that have grown old in a single state are generally to be found morose, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims; soon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any association, but with those that will watch their nod, and submit themselves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the necessity of consulting any inclination but their own.

The irascibility of this class of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, such as are incident to understandings not far extended beyond the instincts of animal life; but unhappily he that fixes his *attention on things* always before him, will never



have long cessations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury, upon whom every noon brings a paroxysm of violence, fury, and execration ; they never sit down to their dinner without finding the meat so injudiciously bought, or so unskilfully dressed, such blunders in the seasoning, or such improprieties in the sauce, as can scarcely be expiated without blood ; and, in the transports of resentment, make very little distinctions between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their discontent, upon all whom fortune exposes to the storm.

It is not easy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peevish man. In every other state of inferiority the certainty of pleasing is perpetually increased by a fuller knowledge of our duty ; and kindness and confidence are strengthened by every new act of trust, and proof of fidelity. But peevishness sacrifices to a momentary offence the obsequiousness or usefulness of half a life, and as more is performed, increases her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country : and, having a brother burthened by the number of his children, adopted one of his sons. The boy was dismissed with many prudent admonitions ; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank ; cautioned against all opposition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle, and animated to perseverance by the hopes of supporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection or elevation of sentiment ; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice ; patiently endured contradictory reproofs ; heard false accusations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply ; laughed obstreperously at the ninetieth repetition of a joke ; asked questions about the universal decay of

trade ; admired the strength of those heads by which the price of stocks is changed and adjusted ; and behaved with such prudence and circumspection, that after six years the will was made, and Juvenculus was declared heir. But unhappily a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him : the old man tore his will, and being then perceptibly declining for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbittered by age or solitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and spiteful superintendence of domestic trifles. Eriphile has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of servants, the nastiness of her house, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preserving tapestry from the moths, and the carelessness of the sluts whom she employs in brushing it. It is her business every morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels neither inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcilable enemy to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop ; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a Turkey carpet ; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty ; and resolves to confine

herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble to bear the lightest addition to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness from causes unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inādvērtencies or offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least; some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we must let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

That it is every man's interest to be pleased, will need little proof: that it is his interest to please others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not less necessary to happiness than to virtue, that he rid his mind of passions which make him uneasy to himself, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obstruct his improvement.

## No. 113. TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1751.

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— *Uxorem, Posthume, ducis ?*

*Dic quâ Tisiphone, quibus exagitare colubris ?*

JUV. SAT. VI. 28.

A sober man like thee to change his life !  
What fury would possess thee with a wife ?

DRYDEN.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ I KNOW not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat censure with contempt. We owe so much reverence to the wisdom of mankind, as justly to wish that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other suffrages ; and since guilt and infamy must have the same effect upon intelligencies unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a false charge, lest we should countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accusation with supercilious silence is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villany, and inspirited by innocence. The wall of brass which Horace erects upon a clear conscience, may be sometimes raised by impudence or power ; and we should always wish to preserve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedness cannot assume.

“ For this reason I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or sullen resignation, a reproach, which is, at least in my opinion, unjust ;

but will lay my case honestly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

“ Whether you will be able to preserve your boasted impartiality, when you hear that I am considered as an adversary by half the female world, you may surely pardon me for doubting, notwithstanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourself entitled by your age, your learning, your abstraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. Rambler, has often overpowered the resolutions of the firm, and the reasonings of the wise, roused the old to sensibility, and subdued the rigorous to softness.

“ I am one of those unhappy beings who have been marked out as husbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have discussed all the nuptial preliminaries so often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are settled, pin-money secured, and provisions for younger children ascertained ; but am at last doomed, by general consent, to everlasting solitude, and excluded by an irreversible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother as a man whose visits cannot be admitted without reproach ; who raises hopes only to imbitter disappointment, and makes offers only to seduce girls into a waste of that part of life in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become mistresses and mothers.

“ I hope you will think that some part of this penal severity may justly be remitted, when I inform you, that I never yet professed love to a woman without sincere intentions of marriage ; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preserve her whom I was leaving from the shock of abruptness, or the ignominy of contempt ; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportu-

nity of seeming to discard me ; and that I never forsook a mistress for larger fortune or brighter beauty, but because I discovered some irregularity in her conduct, or some depravity in her mind ; not because I was charmed by another, but because I was offended by herself.

“ I was very early tired of that succession of amusements by which the thoughts of most young men are dissipated, and had not long glittered in the splendour of an ample patrimony before I wished for the calm of domestic happiness. Youth is naturally delighted with sprightliness and ardour, and, therefore, I breathed out the sighs of my first affection at the feet of the gay, the sparkling, the vivacious Ferocula. I fancied to myself a perpetual source of happiness in wit never exhausted, and spirit never depressed ; looked with veneration on her readiness of expedients, contempt of difficulty, assurance of address, and promptitude of reply ; considered her as exempt by some prerogative of nature from the weakness and timidity of female minds ; and congratulated myself upon a companion superior to all common troubles and embarrassments. I was, indeed, somewhat disturbed by the unshaken perseverance with which she enforced her demands of an unreasonable settlement ; yet I should have consented to pass my life in union with her, had not my curiosity led me to a crowd gathered in the street, where I found Ferocula, in the presence of hundreds, disputing for sixpence with a chairman. I saw her in so little need of assistance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interposition, and I spared myself the shame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot some point of ceremony at our next interview, and soon provoked her to forbid me her presence.

“ *My next attempt was upon a lady of great*

eminence for learning and philosophy. I had frequently observed the barrenness and uniformity of connubial conversation, and therefore thought highly of my own prudence and discernment, when I selected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read Misothea, who declared herself the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertness and puerile levity ; and scarcely condescended to make tea, but for the linguist, the geometrician, the astronomer, or the poet. The queen of the Amazons was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in single combat ; and Misothea's heart was only to bless the scholar who could overpower her by disputation. Amidst the fondest transports of courtship she could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular syllogism. You may easily imagine, that I wished this courtship at an end ; but when I desired her to shorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long conversation, in which Misothea endeavoured to demonstrate the folly of attributing choice and self-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to discover the danger of committing myself for ever to the arms of one who might at any time mistake the dictates of passion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate ; or consider cuckoldom as necessary to the general system, as a link in the everlasting chain of successive causes. I therefore told her, that destiny had ordained us to part, and that nothing should have torn me from her but the talons of necessity.

“ I then solicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the economical Sophronia, a lady who considered wit as dangerous, and learning as superfluous, and thought that the woman who kept her house clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts

for every payment, and could find them at a sudden call, inquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of stocks once a week, and purchased every thing at the best market, could want no accomplishments necessary to the happiness of a wise man. She discoursed with great solemnity on the care and vigilance which the superintendence of a family demands ; observed how many were ruined by confidence in servants ; and told me, that she never expected honesty but from a strong chest, and that the best storekeeper was the mistress's eye. Many such oracles of generosity she uttered, and made every day new improvements in her schemes for the regulation of her servants, and the distribution of her time. I was convinced, that, whatever I might suffer from Sophronia, I should escape poverty ; and we therefore proceeded to adjust the settlements according to her own rule, fair and softly. But one morning her maid came to me in tears, to intreat my interest for a reconciliation to her mistress, who had turned her out at night for breaking six teeth in a tortoise-shell comb : she had attended her lady from a distant province, and having not lived long enough to save much money, was destitute among strangers, and though of a good family, in danger of perishing in the streets, or of being compelled by hunger to prostitution. I made no scruple of promising to restore her ; but upon my first application to Sophronia, was answered with an air which called for approbation, that if she neglected her own affairs, I might suspect her of neglecting mine ; that the comb stood her in three half-crowns ; that no servant should wrong her twice ; and that, indeed, she took the first opportunity of parting with Philida, because, though she was honest, her constitution was bad, and she thought her very likely to fall sick. *Of our conference I need not tell you the ef-*



fect ; it surely may be forgiven me, if, on this occasion, I forgot the decency of common forms.

“ From two more ladies I was disengaged, by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our settlements. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain ; another, because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young ; and another, because, to increase her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

“ I shall, in another letter, give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

“ I am, &c.

“ HYMENÆUS.”

No. 114. SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1751.

— *Audi,*

*Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est.*

JUV. SAT. VI. 219.

— When man's life is in debate,  
The judge can ne'er too long deliberate.

DRYDEN.

POWER and superiority are so flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation, and exposed to

danger as they are, scarcely any virtue is so cautious, or any prudence so timorous, as to decline them. Even those that have most reverence for the laws of right, are pleased with showing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wish to pass; and, as the Roman satirist remarks, he that has no design to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

From the same principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the desire of investing lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than persuasion. Pride is unwilling to believe the necessity of assigning any other reason than her own will; and would rather maintain the most equitable claims by violence and penalties, than descend from the dignity of command, to dispute and expostulation.

It may, I think, be suspected, that this political arrogance has sometimes found its way into legislative assemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A slight perusal of the laws by which the measures of vindictive and coercive justice are established, will discover so many disproportions between crimes and punishments, such capricious distinctions of guilt, and such confusion of remissness and severity, as can scarcely be believed to have been produced by public wisdom, sincerely and calmly studious of public happiness.

The learned, the judicious, the pious Boerhaave relates, that he never saw a criminal dragged to execution without asking himself, ‘Who knows whether this man is not less culpable than me?’ On the days when the prisons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every spectator of the dreadful *procession* put the same question to his own heart.

Few among those that crowd in thousands to the legal massacre, and look with carelessness, perhaps with triumph, on the utmost exacerbations of human misery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection. For, who can congratulate himself upon a life passed without some act more mischievous to the peace or prosperity of others than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular species of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its suppression by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their successors are frightened into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and subtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the pursuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes, very different in their degrees of enormity, are equally subjected to the severest punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

The lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity, that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

This method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly

increasing: yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrific punishments; some are inclined to accelerate the executions; some to discourage pardons; and all seem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedness, and that we can only be rescued from the talons of robbery, by inflexible rigour and sanguinary justice.

Yet, since the right of setting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been disputed, and since experience of past times gives us little reason to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow-beings, perhaps it will not be useless to consider what consequences might arise from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable adaptation of penalties to offences.

Death is, as one of the ancients observes, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερῶτατον, 'of dreadful things the most dreadful;' an evil, beyond which nothing can be threatened by sublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror should, therefore, be reserved as the last resort of authority, as the strongest and most operative of prohibitory sanctions, and placed before the treasure of life, to guard from invasion what cannot be restored. To equal robbery with murder, is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of iniquity, and incite the commission of a greater crime to prevent the detection of a less. If only murder were punished with death, very few robbers would stain their hands in blood; but when by the last act of cruelty no new danger is incurred, and greater security may be obtained, upon what principle shall we bid them forbear?

*It may be urged, that the sentence is often miti-*

gated to simple robbery ; but surely this is to confess that our laws are unreasonable in our own opinion ; and, indeed, it may be observed, that all but murderers have, at their last hour, the common sensations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the punishment to the offence, proceeds the frequent solicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet shocked at the thought of destroying him. His crime shrinks to nothing compared with his misery ; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community ; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates, than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery ; nor when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments, therefore, rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we proceed only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think that to pick the pocket and to pierce the heart, is equally criminal, will scarcely believe that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment ; nor is the necessity of submitting the conscience to human laws so plainly evinced, so clearly stated, or so generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the just, will always scruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgement cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that state in which there is no repentance, has conversed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compassion may incur from those who confound cruelty with firmness, I know not whether any wise man would wish it less powerful, or less extensive.

If those, whom the wisdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might, by proper discipline and useful labour, have been disentangled from their habits, they might have escaped all the temptations to subsequent crimes, and passed their days in reparation and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the prosecutors been certain that their lives would have been spared. I believe, every thief will confess, that he has been more than once seized and dismissed; and that he has sometimes ventured upon capital crimes, because he knew, that those whom he injured would rather connive at his escape, than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws against wickedness are ineffectual, unless some will inform, and some will prosecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and prosecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of punishing a slight injury with death; especially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured safety by another crime, from which he was restrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to assist the exercise of public justice are indeed strong; but they will certainly be *overpowered by tenderness for life*. What is pu-

nished with severity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be seldom discovered ; and multitudes will be suffered to advance from crime to crime, till they deserve death, because, if they had been sooner prosecuted, they would have suffered death before they deserved it.

This scheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedness by lenity, is so remote from common practice, that I might reasonably fear to expose it to the public, could it be supported only by my own observations : I shall, therefore, by ascribing it to its author, Sir Thomas More, endeavour to procure it that attention which I wish always paid to prudence, to justice, and to mercy.

No. 115. TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 1751.

*Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.*

JUV. SAT. VI. 183.

Some faults, though small, intolerable grow.

DRYDEN.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ I sit down in pursuance of my late engagement to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befell me in my long quest of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been so happy as to obtain it, I have at least endeavoured to deserve by unwearied diligence, without suffering, from repeated disap-

pointments, any abatement of my hope, or repression of my activity.

“ You must have observed in the world a species of mortals who employ themselves in promoting matrimony, and, without any visible motive of interest or vanity, without any discoverable impulse of malice or benevolence, without any reason, but that they want objects of attention and topics of conversation, are incessantly busy in procuring wives and husbands. They fill the ears of every single man and woman with some convenient match, and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner of life with the same readiness, and the same indifference, as a salesman, when he has taken measure by his eye, fits his customer with a coat.

“ It might be expected that they should soon be discouraged from this officious interposition by resentment or contempt ; and that every man should determine the choice on which so much of his happiness must depend, by his own judgement and observation : yet it happens, that as these proposals are generally made with a show of kindness, they seldom provoke anger, but are at worst heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation ; for many are sure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect ; and in more powerful and active understandings they excite curiosity, and sometimes, by a lucky chance, bring persons of similar tempers within the attraction of each other.

“ I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife ; and, therefore, was frequently attended by these hymeneal solicitors, with whose importunity I was sometimes diverted, and sometimes perplexed ; for they contended for me as vultures for a carcass ; each employing all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own scheme, from



the success of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleasure of defeating others equally eager and equally industrious.

“An invitation to sup with one of those busy friends made me, by a concerted chance, acquainted with Camilla, by whom it was expected, that I should be suddenly and irresistibly enslaved. The lady, whom the same kindness had brought without her own concurrence into the lists of love, seemed to think me at least worthy of the honour of captivity ; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with so much art and spirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myself irrevocably at the first interview, yet I could not suppress some raptures of admiration, and flutters of desire. I was easily persuaded to make nearer approaches ; but soon discovered, that an union with Camilla was not much to be wished. Camilla professed a boundless contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence, of her own sex ; and very frequently expressed her wonder, that men of learning or experience could submit to trifle away life with beings incapable of solid thought. In mixed companies she always associated with the men, and declared her satisfaction when the ladies retired. If any short excursion into the country was proposed, she commonly insisted upon the exclusion of women from the party ; because, where they were admitted, the time was wasted in frothy compliments, weak indulgencies, and idle ceremonies. To show the greatness of her mind, she avoided all compliance with the fashion ; and to boast the profundity of her knowledge, mistook the various textures of silk, confounded tabbies with damasks, and sent for ribands by wrong names. She despised the commerce of stated visits, a farce of empty form without instruction ; and congratulated

herself that she never learned to write message cards. She often applauded the noble sentiment of Plato, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of Swift's opinion, that women are only a higher species of monkeys; and confessed, that when she considered the behaviour, or heard the conversation of her sex, she could not but forgive the Turks for suspecting them to want souls.

"It was the joy and pride of Camilla to have provoked by this insolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the persecutions of calumny; nor was she ever more elevated with her own superiority, than when she talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, says she, has nature provided that such virulence should be disabled by folly, and such cruelty be restrained by impotence.

"Camilla doubtless expected, that what she lost on one side, she should gain on the other; and imagined, that every male heart would be open to a lady who made such generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, instead of springing forward to meet her, shrunk back at her approach. She was persecuted by the ladies as a deserter, and at best received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amused myself awhile with her fopperies, but novelty soon gave way to detestation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedness of man without his force, and the ignorance of woman without her softness; nor could I think my quiet and honour to be entrusted to such audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and soliciting assault.

"My next mistress was Nitella, a lady of gentle mien and soft voice, always speaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from those with whom

chance had brought her into company. In Nitella, I promised myself an easy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without disturbance or altercation. I therefore soon resolved to address her, but was discouraged from prosecuting my courtship, by observing, that her apartments were superstitiously regular ; and that, unless she had notice of my visit, she was never to be seen. There is a kind of anxious cleanliness which I have always noted as the characteristic of a slattern ; it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspicion ; it is the violence of an effort against habit, which, being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

“ Nitella was always tricked out rather with nicety than elegance ; and seldom could forbear to discover, by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burthened, and her imagination engrossed ; I, therefore, concluded, that being only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel : I quickly found, that Nitella passed her time between finery and dirt ; and was always in a wrapper, nightcap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate show.

“ I was then led by my evil destiny to Charybdis, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by permission to attend her to public places ; and pleased my own vanity with imagining the envy which I should raise in a thousand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of Charybdis. She soon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part

of the kingdom which she had never seen. I solicited the happiness of accompanying her, which, after a short reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curiosity in her journey, than after all possible means of expense ; and was every moment taking occasion to mention some delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon such notices to procure.

“ After our return, being now more familiar, she told me, whenever we met, of some new diversion : at night she had notice of a charming company that would breakfast in the gardens ; and in the morning had been informed of some new song in the opera, some new dress at the play-house, or some performer at a concert whom she longed to hear. Her intelligence was such, that there never was a show to which she did not summon me on the second day ; and as she hated a crowd, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at some intermediate hour, and pay the price of a whole company. When we passed the streets, she was often charmed with some trinket in the toy-shops ; and, from moderate desires of seals and snuff-boxes, rose, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the smile of Charybdis too costly for a private purse, and added one more to six-and-forty lovers, whose fortune and patience her rapacity had exhausted.

“ Imperia then took possession of my affections ; but kept them only for a short time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and having spent the early part of her life in the perusal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of Cleopatra ; expected nothing less than vows, altars, and sacrifices ; and thought her charms dishonoured, and her power infringed, by the softest opposition to her sentiments, or the smallest transgression of her commands. Time might, indeed, cure this species of *pride in a mind not naturally undiscerning*, and vi-

tiated only by false representations ; but the operations of time are slow ; and I, therefore, left her to grow wise at leisure, or to continue in error at her own expense.

“ Thus I have hitherto, in spite of myself, passed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify ; that I dress up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the same excellence in corporeal beauty. But surely, Mr. Rambler, it is not madness to hope for some terrestrial lady unstained with the spots which I have been describing ; at least I am resolved to pursue my search ; for I am so far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the highest happiness decreed to our present state ; and if, after all these miscarriages, I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you shall hear once more from,

“ Yours, &c.

“ HYMENÆUS.”

No. 116. SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 1751.

*Optat ephippia bos piger ; optat arare caballus.*

HOR. EPIST. i. 14. 43.

Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim ;  
The sprightly horse would plough.—

FRANCIS.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ I WAS the second son of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of London. My father having, by his marriage, freed the estate from a

heavy mortgage, and paid his sisters their portions, thought himself discharged from all obligation to further thought, and entitled to spend the rest of his life in rural pleasures. He, therefore, spared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity ; he procured the best guns and horses that the kingdom could supply, paid large salaries to his groom and huntsman, and became the envy of the county for the discipline of his hounds. But above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers and setting-dogs, which, by long and vigilant cultivation he had so much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could rest in security ; and game of whatever species that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his shot, or covered with his nets.

“ My elder brother was very early initiated in the chase, and, at an age when other boys are

— creeping, like snails,

Unwillingly, to school,

he could wind the horn, beat the bushes, bound over hedges, and swim rivers. When the huntsman one day broke his leg, he supplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the scut in his hat, amidst the acclamations of the whole village. I, being either delicate or timorous, less desirous of honour, or less capable of sylvan heroism, was always the favourite of my mother ; because I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home, like my brother, mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horse, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

“ My mother had not been taught to amuse herself with books, and being much inclined to despise the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, disdained to learn their sentiments or conversation, and had made no addition to the notions which she had brought from the precincts of Cornhill. She was,

therefore, always recounting the glories of the city ; enumerating the succession of mayors ; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at Guildhall ; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies' feasts, by men of whom some are now made aldermen, some have fined for sheriffs, and none are worth less than forty thousand pounds. She frequently displayed her father's greatness ; told of the large bills which he had paid at sight ; of the sums for which his word would pass upon the Exchange ; the heaps of gold which he used on Saturday night to toss about with a shovel ; the extent of his warehouse, and the strength of his doors ; and when she relaxed her imagination with lower subjects, described the furniture of their country-house, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

“ By these narratives I was fired with the splendour and dignity of London and of trade. I therefore devoted myself to a shop, and warmed my imagination from year to year with inquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

“ I was very impatient to enter into a path which led to such honour and felicity ; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that a young man seldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty. They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants' accounts, and the art of regulating books ; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and, with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

“ My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the main chance ; his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of showing it, that, without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world ; and was always treated with respect by the only men, whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

“ By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and pack-thread ; and soon caught from my fellow-apprentices the true grace of a counter bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the riband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and, therefore, applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critic in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was sometimes consulted by the weavers, when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

“ With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship, I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But, unhappily, at the first public table to which I was invited, appeared a student of the Temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a



smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company, for part of the day, with historical narratives and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade, and Spaniards; and once attempted, with some warmth, to correct a gross mistake about a silver breast-knot; but neither of my antagonists seemed to think a reply necessary; they resumed their discourse without emotion, and again engrossed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear desirous to know my opinion of her dress, or to hear how long the carnation shot with white, that was then new amongst them, had been antiquated in town.

“As I knew that neither of these gentlemen had more money than myself, I could not discover what had depressed me in their presence; nor why they were considered by others as more worthy of attention and respect; and therefore resolved, when we met again, to rouse my spirit, and force myself into notice. I went very early to the next weekly meeting, and was entertaining a small circle very successfully with a minute representation of my lord mayor’s show, when the colonel entered careless and gay, sat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and, without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other part of the room, *to which* I had not the courage to follow them. Soon *after* came in the lawyer, not, indeed, with the same

attraction of mien, but with greater powers of language; and by one or other the company was so happily amused, that I was neither heard nor seen, nor was able to give any other proof of my existence, than that I put round the glass, and was, in my turn, permitted to name the toast.

“ My mother, indeed, endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps these showy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket needs not care what any man says of him; that if I minded my trade, the time will come when lawyers and soldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purse; and that it is fine when a man can set his hands to his sides, and say he is worth forty thousand pounds every day of the year. These, and many more such consolations and encouragements, I received from my good mother, which, however, did not much allay my uneasiness; for having, by some accident, heard that the country ladies despised her as a cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but considered her as one whose ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a state of meanness and ignominy, from which I could not find any possibility of rising to the rank which my ancestors had always held.

“ I returned, however, to my master, and busied myself among thread, and silk, and laces, but without my former cheerfulness or alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact disposition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the glossy blackness of my shoes; nor heard with my former elevation those compliments which ladies sometimes condescended to pay me upon my readiness in twisting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *young man*, with which I *was sometimes* honoured, as I carried a parcel to the

door of a coach, tortured my imagination ; I grew negligent in my person, and sullen in my temper, often mistook the demands of the customers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and dismissed them with surly silence:

“ My master was afraid lest the shop should suffer by this change of my behaviour ; and, therefore, after some expostulations, posted me in the warehouse, and preserved me from the danger and reproach of desertion, to which my discontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

“ In the sixth year of my servitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and, with the hearty consent of my master, commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me shall be communicated in another letter, by, SIR,

“ Yours, &c.

“ MISOCAPELUS.”

No. 117. TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1751.

*“Οσσα ἰπ’ Οὐλύμπῳ μίμασαν θίμιν· αὐτὰρ ἰπ’ Ὀσση  
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἰν’ οὐρανὸς ἀμύμονος εἴη.*

HOM.

The gods they challenge, and affect the skies;  
Heaved on Olympus tottering Ossa stood;  
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood.

POPE.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the disposition of vulgar minds to ridi-

eule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All industry must be excited by hope ; and as the student often proposes no other reward to himself than praise, he is easily discouraged by contempt and insult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluse speculation, and has never hardened his front in public life, or accustomed his passions to the vicissitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed conversation, will blush at the stare of petulant incredulity, and suffer himself to be driven by a burst of laughter from the fortresses of demonstration. The mechanist will be afraid to assert before hardy contradiction, the possibility of tearing down bulwarks with a silk-worm's thread ; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

“ If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret ; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect : or perhaps others foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

“ That the professors of literature generally reside in the highest stories, has been immemorially observed. The wisdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an ele-

vated situation: why else were the Muses stationed on Olympus or Parnassus, by those who could with equal right have raised them bowers in the vale of Tempe, or erected their altars among the flexures of Meander? Why was Jove himself nursed upon a mountain? or why did the goddesses, when the prize of beauty was contested, try the cause upon the top of Ida? Such were the fictions by which the great masters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to posterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obscured by the negligence and ignorance of succeeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated symbol of Pythagoras, ἀνέμων πνιόντων, τὴν ἡχὴν προσκύνει; ‘when the wind blows, worship its echo.’ This could not but be understood by his disciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently visited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of Augustus, for Tibullus evidently congratulates himself upon his garret, not without some allusion to the Pythagorean precept.

*Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—  
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cum fuderit auster,  
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi!*

How sweet in sleep to pass the careless hours,  
Lull'd by the beating winds and dashing showers!

“And it is impossible not to discover the fondness of Lucretius, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his description of the lofty towers of serene learning, and of the pleasure with which a wise man looks down upon the confused and erratic state of the world moving below him.

*Sed nil dulcius est, bene quàm munita tenere  
Edita doctrinâ sapientum templa serena;  
Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre  
Errare, atque viam palentis quærere vitæ.*

— 'Tis sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide  
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,  
And all the magazines of learning fortified :  
From thence to look below on human kind,  
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind.

DRYDEN.

“ The institution has, indeed, continued to our own time ; the garret is still the usual receptacle of the philosopher and poet ; but this, like many ancient customs, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reason for which it was established.

*Causa latet ; res est notissima.*

The cause is secret, but th' effect is known.

ADDISON.

“ Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning these habitations of literature, but without much satisfaction to the judicious inquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally chosen by the wits, as most easily rented ; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aërial abode, but on the days of payment. Others suspect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the house from the outer door, which is often observed to be infested by visitants, who talk incessantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the same sounds every morning, and sometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raise their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always detestable to a man whose chief pleasure is, to enlarge his knowledge and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noise, and abstraction from common business or amusements ; and some yet more.

visionary, tell us that the faculties are enlarged by open prospects, and that the fancy is more at liberty when the eye ranges without confinement.

“ These conveniences may perhaps all be found in a well chosen garret ; but surely they cannot be supposed sufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, distant ages, and separate nations. Of an universal practice, there must still be presumed an universal cause, which, however recondite and abstruse, may be perhaps reserved to make me illustrious by the discovery, and you by its promulgation.

“ It is universally known, that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the state of the body, and that the body is, in a great measure, regulated by the various compressions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporeal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of Hippocrates ; but no man has yet sufficiently considered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords instances of local understanding, of wits and reasoners, whose faculties are adapted to some single spot, and who, when they are removed to any other place, sink at once into silence and stupidity. I have discovered, by a long series of observations, that invention and elocution suffer great impediments from dense and impure vapours, and that the tenuity of a defecated air, at a proper distance from the surface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and sets at liberty those intellectual powers which were before shackled by too strong attraction, and unable to expand themselves under the pressure of a gross atmosphere. I have found dulness to quicken into sentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhausted ; and heads, in appearance empty, have teemed with notions upon rising ground,

as the flaccid sides of a football would have swelled out into stiffness and extension.

“For this reason, I never think myself qualified to judge decisively of any man’s faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take some opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condensation, tension and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor serious below, I then consider him as hopeless; but as it seldom happens that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, first marking the point most favourable to his intellects, according to rules which I have long studied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatise of barometrical pneumatology.

“Another cause of the gaiety and sprightliness of the dwellers in garrets is probably the increase of that vertiginous motion with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the spirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horse; and nothing is plainer than that he who towers to the fifth story is whirled through more space by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropics are known to be fiery, inconstant, inventive, and fanciful; because, living at the utmost length of the earth’s diameter, they are carried about with more swiftness than those whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and, therefore, as it becomes a wise man to struggle with the inconveniencies of his country, whenever celerity and acuteness are requisite, we must actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the centre in a garret.



“ If you imagine that I ascribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I desire you to consult your own memory, and consider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the first floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of understanding till he was restored to his original situation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from supposing; I know there are some who would continue blockheads, even on the summit of the Andes, or on the peak of Teneriffe. But let not any man be considered as unimprovable till this potent remedy has been tried; for, perhaps, he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of Aretæus was rational in no other place but his own shop.

“ I think a frequent removal to various distances from the centre, so necessary to a just estimate of intellectual abilities, and consequently of so great use in education, that if I hoped that the public could be persuaded to so expensive an experiment, I would propose, that there should be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like those which Bacon describes in Solomon’s house, for the expansion and concentration of understanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or constitutions. Perhaps, some that fume away in meditations upon time and space in the tower, might compose tables of interest at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground stagnates in silence, or creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, sparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

“ Addison observes, that we may find the heat of Virgil’s climate in some lines of his Georgics: so, when I read a composition, I immediately determine the height of the author’s habitation. As an cla-

borate performance is commonly said to smell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a sprightly sally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it fresh from the garret; an expression which would break from me upon the perusal of most of your papers, did I not believe, that you sometimes quit the garret, and ascend into the cock-loft.

“HYPERTATUS.”

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No. 118. SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1751.

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—*Omnes illacrymabiles  
Urgentur, ignotique longâ  
Nocte.*—

MOR. CAR. iv. 9. 26.

In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown.

FRANCIS.

CICERO has, with his usual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of Scipio, to depreciate those honours for which he himself appears to have panted with restless solicitude, by showing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope from men is circumscribed.

“You see,” says Africanus, pointing at the earth from the celestial regions, “that the globe assigned to the residence and habitation of human beings is of small dimensions: how then can you obtain from the praise of men, any glory worthy of a wish? Of this little world the inhabited parts are neither nu-

merous nor wide ; even the spots where men are to be found, are broken by intervening deserts ; and the nations are so separated as that nothing can be transmitted from one to another. With the people of the south, by whom the opposite part of the earth is possessed, you have no intercourse ; and by how small a tract do you communicate with the countries of the north ? The territory which you inhabit is no more than a scanty island, enclosed by a small body of water, to which you give the name of the great sea and the Atlantic ocean. And even in this known and frequented continent, what hope can you entertain, that your renown will pass the stream of Ganges, or the cliffs of Caucasus ? Or by whom will your name be uttered in the extremities of the north or south, towards the rising or the setting sun ? So narrow is the space to which your fame can be propagated, and even there how long will it remain ?”

He then proceeds to assign natural causes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but short in its duration ; he observes the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares, that, according to the celestial chronology, no human honours can last a single year.

Such are the objections by which Tully has made a show of discouraging the pursuit of fame ; objections which sufficiently discover his tenderness and regard for his darling phantom. Homer, when the plan of his poem made the death of Patroclus necessary, resolved, at least, that he should die with honour ; and, therefore, brought down against him the patron god of Troy, and left to Hector only the mean task of giving the last blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had disabled from resistance. Thus Tully ennobles fame, which he professes to degrade, by opposing it to celestial happiness ; he confines *not its extent* but by the boundaries of nature, nor

contracts its duration but by representing it small in the estimation of superior beings. He still admits it the highest and noblest of terrestrial objects, and alleges little more against it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

What might be the effect of these observations conveyed in Ciceronian eloquence to Roman understandings, cannot be determined; but few of those who shall, in the present age, read my humble version, will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivation of knowledge, or the acquisition of power, have very anxiously inquired what opinions prevail on the further banks of the Ganges, or invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of Caucasus. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation and a few years have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imagination.

A little consideration will, indeed, teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the Atlantic sea.

The numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are inconsiderable; and where neither benefit nor mischief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curiosity; a passion, which, though in some degree universally associated to reason, is easily confined, overborne, or diverted from any particular object.

Among the lower classes of mankind, there will be found very little desire of any other knowledge.

than what may contribute immediately to the relief of some pressing uneasiness, or the attainment of some near advantage. The Turks are said to hear with wonder a proposal to walk out only that they may walk back; and inquire why any man should labour for nothing: so those whose condition has always restrained them to the contemplation of their own necessities, and who have been accustomed to look forward only to a small distance, will scarcely understand why nights and days should be spent in studies, which end in new studies, and which, according to Malherbe's observation, do not tend to lessen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer easily be persuaded, that much pleasure can arise from the mere knowledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their inquiry, of which *κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν, οὐδὲ τι ἴδμεν*, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to enquire for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of Corinna; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when

they are obtruded upon an attention thus busy with its favourite amusement, and impatient of interruption or disturbance.

But not only such employments as seduce attention by appearances of dignity, or promises of happiness, may restrain the mind from excursion and inquiry; curiosity may be equally destroyed by less formidable enemies; it may be dissipated in trifles, or congealed by indolence. The sportsman and the man of dress have their heads filled with a fox or a horse-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beside, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or solicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and some yet lower in the ranks of intellect, dream out their days without pleasure or business, without joy or sorrow, nor ever rouse from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of those who have dedicated themselves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curiosity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame but that of which their own studies entitle them to partake. The naturalist has no desire to know the opinions or conjectures of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the valleys of life no voice but that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, *and consider the mention of his name as an usurpa-*

tion of their time; all who are too much, or too little pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are withheld from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown straitened by nearer bounds than the rocks of Caucasus, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

That we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary that, as Africanus counsels his descendant, 'we raise our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without giving up our hearts to the praise of crowds, or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow.'

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No. 119. TUESDAY, MAY 7, 1751.

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*Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra.*

HOR. EPIST. l. 2. 16.

Faults lay on either side the Trojan towers.

ELPHINSTON.

" TO THE RAMBLER.

" SIR,

" As, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have

never therefore thought those writers friends to human happiness, who endeavour to excite in either sex a general contempt or suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a suitable associate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous ; that they who trust are certainly betrayed, and they who esteem are always disappointed ; is not to awaken judgement, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Those who are convinced that no reason for preference can be found, will never harass their thoughts with doubt and deliberation ; they will resolve, since they are doomed to misery, that no needless anxiety shall disturb their quiet ; they will plunge at hazard into the crowd, and snatch the first hand that shall be held toward them.

“ That the world is overrun with vice, cannot be denied ; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally escape a greater evil by suffering a less ; and, therefore, those who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, should be careful to inculcate the possibility of virtue and happiness, and to encourage endeavours by prospects of success.

“ You, perhaps, do not suspect that these are the sentiments of one who has been subject for many years to all the hardships of antiquated virginity ; has been long accustomed to the coldness of neglect, and the petulance of insult ; has been mortified in full assemblies by inquiries after forgotten fashions, games long disused, and wits and beauties of ancient renown ; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the second wedding of many acquaintances ; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquets in whispers intended to be heard ; and been long considered by the airy and gay as too venerable



for familiarity, and too wise for pleasure. It is, indeed, natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual asperity, yet I have hitherto struggled with so much vigilance against my pride and my resentment, that I have preserved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect sentences against marriage ; nor am inclined to lessen the number of the few friends whom time has left me, by obstructing that happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in censures of the forwardness and indiscretion of girls, or the inconstancy, tastelessness, and perfidy of men.

“ It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by necessity, but induced by observation and choice ; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach, edged with the appellation of old maid, swells some of those hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to solitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor passed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtship, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidst the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applause ; been attended from pleasure to pleasure by the great, the sprightly, and the vain ; and seen my regard solicited by the obsequiousness of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a stranger to nuptial happiness, I suffer only the consequences of my own resolves, and can look back upon the succession of lovers, whose addresses I have rejected, without grief and without malice.

“ When my name first began to be inscribed upon glasses, I was honoured with the amorous professions of the gay Venustulus, a gentleman, who being the only son of a wealthy family, had been educated

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in all the wantonness of expense, and softness of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his person, and easy in his address, and, therefore, soon gained upon my eye at an age when the sight is very little over-ruled by the understanding. He had not any power in himself of gladdening or amusing ; but supplied his want of conversation by treats and diversions ; and his chief art of courtship was to fill the mind of his mistress with parties, rambles, music, and shows. We were often engaged in short excursions to gardens and seats, and I was for a while pleased with the care which Venustulus discovered in securing me from any appearance of danger, or possibility of mischance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promise the waterman a reward if he landed us safe ; and always contrived to return by day-light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary solicitude was represented for a time as the effect of his tenderness for me ; but fear is too strong for continued hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that Venustulus had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could scarcely refrain from screams and outcries at any accidental surprise. He durst not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainscot, nor cross a field where the cattle were frisking in the sunshine ; the least breeze that waved upon the river was a storm, and every clamour in the street was a cry of fire. I have seen him lose his colour when my squirrel had broke his chain ; and was forced to throw water in his face on the sudden entrance of a black cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away, with my fan, a beetle that kept him in distress, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own escape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a

husband, and, therefore, you will not think me culpable in refusing a wretch who would have burthened life with unnecessary fears, and flown to me for that succour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was Fungoso, the son of a stock-jobber, whose visits my friends, by the importunity of persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. Fungoso was no very suitable companion ; for having been bred in a counting-house, he spoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no desire of any reputation but that of an acute prognosticator of the changes in the funds ; nor had any means of raising merriment, but by telling how somebody was overreached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great sobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haste to conclude the match, but was so much awed by my parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might, perhaps, have been doomed for ever to the grossness of pedlary, and the jargon of usury, had not a fraud been discovered in the settlement, which set me free from the persecution of grovelling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

“ I was afterwards six months without any particular notice, but at last became the idol of the glittering Flosculus, who prescribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied, at pleasure, the cock of every hat, and the sleeve of every coat that appeared in fashionable assemblies. Flosculus made some impression upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion ; he commended my skill in dress, my judgement in suiting colours, and my art in disposing ornaments. But Flosculus was too much engaged by his own *elegance* to be sufficiently attentive to the duties of a *lover*, or to please, with varied praise, an ear made de-

licate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and staid away three days, because I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found that Flosculus was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we should probably live in a perpetual struggle of emulous finery, and spend our lives in stratagems to be first in the fashion.

“I had soon after the honour, at a feast, of attracting the eyes of Dentatus, one of those human beings whose only happiness is to dine. Dentatus regaled me with foreign varieties, told me of measures that he had laid for procuring the best cook in France, and entertained me with bills of fare, prescribed the arrangement of dishes, and taught me two sauces invented by himself. At length, such is the uncertainty of human happiness, I declared my opinion too hastily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

“Many other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the honour to lead a while in triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering that they had no taste or knowledge in music; three I dismissed because they were drunkards; two because they paid their addresses at the same time to other ladies; and six, because they attempted to influence my choice, by bribing my maid. Two more I discarded at the second visit, for obscene allusions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I sentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me settlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for representing falsely the value of their estates; three, for concealing their debts; and one for raising the rent of a decrepit tenant.

“I have now sent you a narrative, which the ladies

may oppose to the tale of Hymenæus. I mean not to depreciate the sex which has produced poets and philosophers, heroes and martyrs ; but will not suffer the rising generation of beauties to be dejected by partial satire ; or to imagine, that those who censure them have not likewise their follies and their vices. I do not believe happiness unattainable in marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inseparable union. It is necessary to expose faults, that their deformity may be seen ; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either sex to be condemned, because some women, or men, are indelicate or dishonest.

“ I am, &c.

“ TRANQUILLA.”

No. 120. SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1751.

*Redditum Cyri solio Phraatem  
Dissidens plebi, numero beatorum  
Eximit virtus, populumque falsis  
Dedocet uti*

*Vocibus.—*

HOR. CAR. ii. 2. 17.

True virtue can the crowd unteach  
Their false, mistaken, forms of speech ;  
Virtue to crowds a foe profess'd,  
Disdains to number with the blest  
Phraates, by his slaves adored,  
And to the Parthian crown restored.

FRANCIS.

In the reign of Jenghiz Can, conqueror of the East,  
in the city of Samarcand, lived Nouradin the mer-

chant, renowned throughout all the regions of India for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouses were filled with all the commodities of the remotest nations ; every rarity of nature, every curiosity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was useful, hasted to his hand. The streets were crowded with his carriages ; the sea was covered with his ships ; the streams of Oxus were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the sky wafted wealth to Nouradin.

At length Nouradin felt himself seized with a slow malady, which he first endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence ; but finding his strength every day less, he was at last terrified, and called for help upon the sages of physic ; they filled his apartment with alexipharmics, restoratives, and essential virtues ; the pearls of the ocean were dissolved, the spices of Arabia were distilled, and all the powers of nature were employed to give new spirits to his nerves, and new balsam to his blood. Nouradin was for some time amused with promises, invigorated with cordials, or soothed with anodynes ; but the disease preyed upon his vitals, and he soon discovered, with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deserted by his physicians, and rarely visited by his friends ; but his unwillingness to die, flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having passed the night in tedious languor, he called to him Almamoulin, his only son ; and, dismissing his attendants, ‘ My son,’ says he, ‘ behold here the weakness and fragility of man ; look backward a few days, thy father was great and happy, fresh as the vernal rose, and strong as the cedar of the mountain ; the nations of Asia drank his dews, and art and commerce delighted in his shade. *Malevolence beheld me, and sighed : his root, she cried,*

is fixed in the depths ; it is watered by the fountains of Oxus ; it sends out branches afar, and bids defiance to the blast ; prudence reclines against his trunk, and prosperity dances on his top. Now, Almamoulin, look upon me withering and prostrate ; look upon me and attend. I have trafficked, I have prospered, I have rioted in gain ; my house is splendid, my servants are numerous ; yet I displayed only a small part of my riches ; the rest, which I was hindered from enjoying by the fear of raising envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in towers, I have buried in caverns, I have hidden in secret repositories, which this scroll will discover. My purpose was, after ten months more spent in commerce, to have withdrawn my wealth to a safer country ; to have given seven years to delight and festivity, and the remaining part of my days to solitude and repentance ; but the hand of death is upon me ; a frigid torpor encroaches upon my veins ; I am now leaving the produce of my toil, which it must be thy business to enjoy with wisdom.' The thought of leaving his wealth filled Nouradin with such grief, that he fell into convulsions, became delirious, and expired.

Almamoulin, who loved his father, was touched awhile with honest sorrow, and sat two hours in profound meditation, without perusing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborne with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new possessions, which swelled his heart with such transports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now sufficiently composed to order a funeral of modest magnificence, suitable at once to the rank of Nouradin's profession, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he spent in visiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treasures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

Almamoulin had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expenses of other young men: he therefore believed, that happiness was now in his power, since he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accustomed to regret the want. He resolved to give a loose to his desires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneasiness no more.

He immediately procured a splendid equipage, dressed his servants in rich embroidery, and covered his horses with golden caparisons. He showered down silver on the populace, and suffered their acclamations to swell him with insolence. The nobles saw him with anger, the wise men of the state combined against him, the leaders of armies threatened his destruction. Almamoulin was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the presence of his enemies, and appeased them with gold, and gems, and supplication.

He then sought to strengthen himself, by an alliance with the princes of Tartary, and offered the price of kingdoms for a wife of noble birth. His suit was generally rejected, and his presents refused; but a princess of Astracan once condescended to admit him to her presence. She received him sitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and shining with the jewels of Golconda; command sparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. Almamoulin approached and trembled. She saw his confusion, and disdained him: 'How,' says she, 'dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus shrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches and sordid ostentation; thou wast born to be wealthy, but never canst be great.'

He then contracted his desires to more private and domestic pleasures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he transplanted



forests, he levelled mountains, opened prospects into distant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new channels.

These amusements pleased him for a time ; but languor and weariness soon invaded him. His bowers lost their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchased large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted ; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He, therefore, returned to Samarcand, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies ; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness ; every hour was crowded with pleasure ; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. Almamoulin cried out, ‘ I have at last found the use of riches ; I am surrounded by companions, who view my greatness without envy ; and I enjoy at once the raptures of popularity, and the safety of an obscure station. What trouble can he feel, whom all are studious to please, that they may be repaid with pleasure ? What danger can he dread, to whom every man is a friend ?’

Such were the thoughts of Almamoulin, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay assembly, regaling at his expense ; but in the midst of this soliloquy, an officer of justice entered the house, and, in the form of legal citation, summoned Almamoulin to appear before the emperor. The guests stood awhile aghast, then stole imperceptibly away, and

he was led off without a single voice to witness his integrity. He now found one of his most frequent visitants accusing him of treason, in hopes of sharing his confiscation ; yet, unpatronized, and unsupported, he cleared himself by the openness of innocence, and the consistence of truth ; he was dismissed with honour, and his accuser perished in prison.

Almamoulin now perceived with how little reason he had hoped for justice or fidelity from those who live only to gratify their senses ; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitless searches after felicity, he had recourse to a sage, who, after spending his youth in travel and observation, had retired from all human cares, to a small habitation on the banks of Oxus, where he conversed only with such as solicited his counsel. ‘ Brother,’ said the philosopher, ‘ thou hast suffered thy reason to be deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious appearances. Having long looked with desire upon riches, thou hadst taught thyself to think them more valuable than nature designed them, and to expect from them, what experience has now taught thee, that they cannot give. That they do not confer wisdom, thou mayest be convinced, by considering at how dear a price they tempted thee, upon thy first entrance into the world, to purchase the empty sound of vulgar acclamation. That they cannot bestow fortitude or magnanimity, that man may be certain, who stood trembling at Astracan, before a being not naturally superior to himself. That they will not supply unexhausted pleasure, the recollection of forsaken palaces, and neglected gardens, will easily inform thee. That they rarely purchase friends, thou didst soon discover, when thou wert left to stand thy trial uncountenanced and alone. Yet think not riches useless ; there are purposes to which a wise man may be delighted to apply them ;

they may, by a rational distribution to those who want them, ease the pains of helpless disease, still the throbs of restless anxiety, relieve innocence from oppression, and raise imbecility to cheerfulness and vigour. This they will enable thee to perform, and this will afford the only happiness ordained for our present state, the confidence of divine favour, and the hope of future rewards.'

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No. 121. TUESDAY, MAY 14, 1751.

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*O imitatores, servum pecus! —*

HOR. EPIST. I. 19. 19.

Away ye imitators, servile herd!

ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been informed by a letter from one of the universities, that among the youth from whom the next swarm of reasoners is to learn philosophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, who, instead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themselves with the secondary knowledge which a convenient bench in a coffee-house can supply; and without any examination or distinction, adopt the criticisms and remarks, which happen to drop from those, who have risen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge my correspondent stigmatizes with the name of Echoes; and seems desirous that they should be made ashamed

of lazy submission, and animated to attempts after new discoveries, and original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and severe. For as they seldom comprehend at once all the consequences of a position, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reasoners are restrained from confidence, they form their conclusions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarrass the question, they expect to find their own opinion universally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and hesitation to want of honesty, rather than of knowledge. I may perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correspondent, when it shall be found, that I have no inclination to persecute these collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the severity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of taking into protection those whom I think condemned without a sufficient knowledge of their cause.

He that adopts the sentiments of another, whom he has reason to believe wiser than himself, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praise and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper business of youth; and whether we increase our knowledge by books or by conversation, we are equally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with abilities to construct systems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the schools of art, of being able to comprehend what others discover, and to remember what others teach. Even those to whom Providence hath allotted greater strength of understanding, *can expect only to improve a single science.* In

every other part of learning, they must be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine ; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can seldom add more than some small particle of knowledge, to the hereditary stock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than such as arises from new methods of distribution, or new arts of illustration, the necessity of following the traces of our predecessors is indisputably evident ; but there appears no reason why imagination should be subject to the same restraint. It might be conceived, that of those who profess to forsake the narrow paths of truth, every one may deviate towards a different point, since though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diversified. The roads of science are narrow, so that they who travel them, must either follow or meet one another ; but in the boundless regions of possibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are surely a thousand recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers unplucked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, combinations of imagery yet unobserved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet, whatever hope may persuade, or reason evince, experience can boast of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of Troy, and the travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all succeeding poets with incidents, characters, and sentiments. The Romans are confessed to have attempted little more than to display in their own tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There is, in all their writings, such a perpetual recurrence of allusions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they must be confessed often to want that power of giving pleasure which novelty

supplies ; nor can we wonder that they excelled so much in the graces of diction, when we consider how rarely they were employed in search of new thoughts.

The warmest admirers of the great Mantuan poet can extol him for little more than the skill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in one composition : yet his judgement was perhaps sometimes overborne, by his avarice of the Homeric treasures ; and, for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found, among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor Ajax, who, when the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his own hand in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, his loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praises and submission ; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminently beautiful ; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immoveable constancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known, but by gloomy sullenness and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally shown by silence more contemptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets *Dido* the queen of Carthage, whom his perfidy

had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like Ajax in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might, without any departure from the tenor of her conduct, have burst out like other injured women into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but Virgil had his imagination full of Ajax, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; and accordingly we find, that besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another, they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word, that makes the burthen of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spenser, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius,

seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spenser can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction or his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vicious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Jonson boldly pronounces him to have written no language. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spenser are indeed not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude, that when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since the time of Spenser, as the character of Hector is violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrases, though it is easy to sprinkle it with *gleanings of antiquity*. Perhaps, however, the style



of Spenser might by long labour be justly copied ; but life is surely given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

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No. 122. SATURDAY, MAY 18, 1751.

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*Nescio quâ natale solum dulcedine cunctos  
Ducit.—*

OVID. EX PONT. i. 3. 35.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgement concerning the easiness or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performances of others, or from abstracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease ; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation. We are therefore more powerfully excited to emulation, by those who have attained the highest degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by a previous consideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. It is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise the series of any process with all its circumstances, incidents, and variations, in a speculative scheme. Experience soon

shows us the tortuosities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothness. Sudden difficulties often start up from the ambushes of art, stop the career of activity, repress the gaiety of confidence, and, when we imagine ourselves almost at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different measures.

There are many things which we every day see others unable to perform, and perhaps have even ourselves miscarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afresh at every new failure, or to promise certainty of success to our next essay; but when we try, the same hindrances recur, the same inability is perceived, and the vexation of disappointment must again be suffered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writing which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, none appears so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion. When we have congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of inquiry, and new means of information, it often happens, that without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relator fills the ear with empty sounds, harasses the attention with fruitless impatience, and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The philosopher has the works of omniscience

to examine; and is therefore engaged in disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his invention, and is not only in danger of those inconsistencies, to which every one is exposed by departure from truth; but may be censured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of disposition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy historian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treasure for his use. He has only the actions and designs of men like himself to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconsistency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety consistent, or uniting probability with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the manners and actions of his personages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his powers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages, very few in any age have been able to raise themselves to reputation by writing histories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their ancestors, or undertake to transmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It is observed, that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have

doubted, whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding, have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages ; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause ; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident that we have not historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neighbouring nations can produce ? The attempt of Raleigh is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style ; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgement more than his genius, to select facts, rather than adorn them ; and has produced an historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The work of Clarendon deserves more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them ; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clause and sentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude inartificial majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, swells the mind by its plenitude and diffusion. His narration is not perhaps sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. *But his ignorance or carelessness of the art*

of writing are amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy ; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions ; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation ; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined, without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid ; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people, whose story he relates. It seldom happens that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject ; and that writer, who

might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country, has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

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No. 123. TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1751.

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*Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem  
Testa diu.—*

HOR. EPIST. i. 2. 69.

What season'd first the vessel, keeps the taste.

CREECH.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ THOUGH I have so long found myself deluded by projects of honour and distinction, that I often resolve to admit them no more into my heart ; yet, how determinately soever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or stratagem ; and whenever, after the shortest relaxation of vigilance, reason and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in possession, with all her train of pleasures dancing about her.

“ Even while I am preparing to write a history of disappointed expectations, I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that you and your readers are impatient for my performance ; and that the sons of learning have laid down several of your late papers with discontent ; when they found that Misocapelus had delayed to continue his narrative.

“ But the desire of gratifying the expectations that

I have raised, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promised it, I think myself no longer at liberty to forbear. For, however I may have wished to clear myself from every other adhesion of trade, I hope I shall be always wise enough to retain my punctuality, and amidst all my new arts of politeness, continue to despise negligence, and detest falsehood.

“ When the death of my brother had dismissed me from the duties of a shop, I considered myself as restored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception which my ancestors obtained. I was, however, embarrassed with many difficulties at my first re-entrance into the world ; for my haste to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate measures ; and every accident that forced me back towards my old station, was considered by me as an obstruction of my happiness.

“ It was with no common grief and indignation that I found my former companions still daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices sometimes pulling me by the sleeve as I was walking in the street, and, without any terror of my new sword, which was, notwithstanding, of an uncommon size, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old house, and entertaining me with histories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal state, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery ; and imagined, that to fright away these unwelcome familiarities, nothing was necessary, but that I should, by splendour of dress, proclaim my reunion with a higher rank. I therefore sent for my tailor, ordered a suit with twice the usual quantity of lace, and, that I might not let my persecutors increase their confidence, by the habit of accosting me, staid at home till it was made.

“ This week of confinement I passed in practising a forbidding frown, a smile of condescension, a slight salutation, and an abrupt departure ; and, in four mornings, was able to turn upon my heel with so much levity and sprightliness, that I made no doubt of discouraging all public attempts upon my dignity. I, therefore, issued forth in my new coat, with a resolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter distance ; and pleased myself with the timidity and reverence which I should impress upon all who had hitherto presumed to harass me with their freedoms. But whatever was the cause, I did not find myself received with any new degree of respect ; those whom I intended to drive from me ventured to advance with their usual phrases of benevolence ; and those whose acquaintance I solicited, grew more supercilious and reserved. I began soon to repent the expense, by which I had procured no advantage, and to suspect that a shining dress, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itself, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

“ Many were the mortifications and calamities which I was condemned to suffer in my initiation to politeness. I was so much tortured by the incessant civilities of my companions, that I never passed through that region of the city but in a chair, with the curtains drawn ; and at last left my lodgings, and fixed myself in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman just returned from his travels, and was pleased to have my landlord believe, that I was in some danger from importunate creditors ; but this scheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation sent to offer me, though I had now retired from business, the freedom of my company.

“ I was now detected in trade, and therefore resolved to stay no longer. I hired another apartment,



and changed my servants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with secret satisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatness and felicity of the esquire ; though the conversation seldom ended without some complaint of my covetousness, or some remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the public walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties ; but could not observe without wonder, as I passed by them, how frequently they were talking of a tailor. I longed, however, to be admitted to conversation, and was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady, whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that, as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

“ Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I, indeed, sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned in a short time, the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similes, and contrasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed which I did not understand, and many a groan have I uttered when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At last a malignant author, whose performance I had persecuted through

the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon Tape the critic, which drove me from the pit for ever.

“ My desire to be a fine gentleman still continued ; I, therefore, after a short suspense, chose a new set of friends at the gaming-table, and was for some time pleased with the civility and openness with which I found myself treated. I was, indeed, obliged to play ; but being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never surprised into large sums. What might have been the consequence of long familiarity with these plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing ; for one night the constables entered and seized us, and I was once more compelled to sink into my former condition, by sending for my old master to attest my character.

“ When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I should aspire, I was summoned into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to distinguish myself, and to support the honour of my family, I, therefore, bought guns and horses, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, increased the salary of the huntsman. But when I entered the field, it was soon discovered that I was not destined to the glories of the chase. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marsh ; I shivered on the brink of a river while the sportsmen crossed it, and trembled at the sight of a five-bar gate. When the sport and danger were over, I was still equally disconcerted ; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly whispering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

“ A fall, by which my ribs were broken, soon recalled me to domestic pleasures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies ; but wherever I came, there was always some unlucky conversation upon ribands, fillets, pins, or thread,

which drove all my stock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with shame and dejection.

“ Thus I passed the ten first years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at last to repress that ambition which I could never gratify ; and, instead of wasting more of my life in vain endeavours after accomplishments which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I shall confine my care to those higher excellencies which are in every man’s power ; and, though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and ease, hope to secure esteem by honesty and truth.

“ I am, &c.

“ MISOCAPELUS.”

No. 124. SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1751.

— *Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,  
Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque est.*

HOR. EPIST. i. 4. 4.

To range in silence through each healthful wood,  
And muse what’s worthy of the wise and good.

ELPHINSTON.

THE season of the year is now come, in which the theatres are shut, and the card-tables forsaken ; the regions of luxury are for a while unpeopled, and pleasure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to still scenes and erratic gratifications. Those who have passed many months in a continual tumult of diversion ; who have never opened their eyes in the morn-

ing but upon some new appointment ; nor slept at night without a dream of dances, music, and good hands, or of soft sighs and humble supplications ; must now retire to distant provinces, where the sirens of flattery are scarcely to be heard, where beauty sparkles without praise or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of social benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity, when by timely prevention it may be turned aside, or by preparatory measures be more easily endured, I cannot feel the increasing warmth, or observe the lengthening days, without considering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has so long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accustomed to hope for delight ; and who, till fashion proclaims the liberty of returning to the seats of mirth and elegance, must endure the rugged 'squire, the sober housewife, the loud huntsman, or the formal parson, the roar of obstreperous jollity, or the dulness of prudential instruction ; without any retreat but to the gloom of solitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniences, and must learn, however unwillingly, to endure themselves.

In winter, the life of the polite and gay may be said to roll on with a strong and rapid current ; they float along from pleasure to pleasure, without the trouble of regulating their own motions, and pursue the course of the stream in all the felicity of inattention ; content that they find themselves in progression, and careless whither they are going. But the months of summer are a kind of sleeping stagnation, without wind or tide, where they are left to force themselves forward by their own labour, and to direct their passage by their own skill ; and where, if *they have not* some internal principle of activity,

they must be stranded upon shallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

There are, indeed, some to whom this universal dissolution of gay societies affords a welcome opportunity of quitting, without disgrace, the post which they have found themselves unable to maintain; and of seeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from assemblies where, after a short triumph of uncontested superiority, they are overpowered by some new intruder of softer elegance or sprightlier vivacity. By these, hopeless of victory, and yet ashamed to confess a conquest, the summer is regarded as a release from the fatiguing service of celebrity, a dismissal to more certain joys, and a safer empire. They now solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall effuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They image, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rustics will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to elude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honours and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off, by this cruel interruption, from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in inactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from those exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard to love or beauty; and visits either tropic at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of public resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from

admiration, courtship, submission, and applause, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praise of ignorance, and the subjection of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyrics. Nor, indeed, should the powers which have made havock in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble contest with the ruddy milkmaid.

How then must four long months be worn away? Four months, in which there will be no routs, no shows, no *ridottos*; in which visits must be regulated by the weather, and assemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platonists imagine, that the future punishment of those who have in this life debased their reason by subjection to their senses, and have preferred the gross gratifications of lewdness and luxury, to the pure and sublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will arise from the predominance and solicitations of the same appetites, in a state which can furnish no means of appeasing them. I cannot but suspect that this month, bright with sunshine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorific radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infusions of imagery, and the naturalist new scenes of observation; this month will chain down multitudes to the Platonic penance of desire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the highest satisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a state of hopeless wishes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpose; and the hand of avarice shuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tediousness of this melancholy suspension of life, I would willingly preserve those who are exposed to it only by inexperience ; who want not inclination to wisdom or virtue, though they have been dissipated by negligence, or misled by example ; and who would gladly find the way to rational happiness, though it should be necessary to struggle with habit, and abandon fashion. To these many arts of spending time might be recommended, which would neither sadden the present hour with weariness, nor the future with repentance.

It would seem impossible to a solitary speculatist, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midst of a world filled with variety, perpetually pressing upon the senses and irritating curiosity, is surely a sufficient security against the languishment of inattention. Novelty is indeed necessary to preserve eagerness and alacrity ; but art and nature have stores inexhaustible by human intellects ; and every moment produces something new to him who has quickened his faculties by diligent observation.

Some studies, for which the country and the summer afford peculiar opportunities, I shall, perhaps, endeavour to recommend in a future essay ; but if there be any apprehension not apt to admit unaccustomed ideas, or any attention so stubborn and inflexible, as not easily to comply with new directions, even these obstructions cannot exclude the pleasure of application ; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by Him who gave them. The duties of religion, sincerely and regularly performed, will always be sufficient to exalt the meanest, and to exercise the highest, understanding. That mind will never be vacant,

which is frequently recalled by stated duties to meditations on eternal interests ; nor can any hour be long which is spent in obtaining some new qualification for celestial happiness.

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No. 125. TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1751.

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*Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,  
Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, poeta salutor ?*

HOB. ARS POET. 86.

But if, through weakness, or my want of art,  
I can't to every different style impart  
The proper strokes and colours it may claim,  
Why am I honour'd with a poet's name ?

FRANCIS.

IT is one of the maxims of the civil law, that definitions are hazardous. Things modified by human understandings, subject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are scarcely to be included in any standing form of expression, because they are always suffering some alteration of their state. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man ; every thing is set above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent, or too much diffused in their relations, and the performances of art too inconstant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impossible to impress upon our minds an adequate and just representation of an object so great, that we can never take



it into our view, or so mutable, that it is always changing under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

Definitions have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticism than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction, and burst the inclosures of regularity. There is, therefore, scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents ; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and approved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

Comedy has been particularly unpropitious to definers ; for though, perhaps, they might properly have contented themselves with declaring it to be such a dramatic representation of human life, as may excite mirth, they have embarrassed their definition with the means by which the comic writers attain their end, without considering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be comprised in precept. Thus, some make comedy a representation of mean, and others of bad men ; some think that its essence consists in the unimportance, others in the fictitiousness, of the transaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatic composition which raises mirth is comic ; and that, to raise mirth, it is by no means universally necessary, that the personages should be either mean or corrupt, nor always requisite, that the action should be trivial, nor ever, that it should be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatic poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, some absurdities might have been prevented, with which the

compositions of our greatest poets are disgraced, who, for want of some settled ideas and accurate distinction, have unhappily confounded tragic with comic sentiments. They seem to have thought, that as the meanness of personages constituted comedy, their greatness was sufficient to form a tragedy; and that nothing was necessary but that they should crowd the scene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfall of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not considered that thoughts, or incidents, in themselves ridiculous, grow still more grotesque by the solemnity of such characters; that reason and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is despicable and absurd, will not, by any association with splendid titles, become rational or great; that the most important affairs, by an intermixture of an unseasonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no dignity to nonsense or to folly.

‘Comedy,’ says Horace, ‘sometimes raises her voice;’ and tragedy may likewise, on proper occasions, abate her dignity; but as the comic personages can only depart from their familiarity of style, when the more violent passions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy should never descend to trifle, but in the hours of ease, and intermissions of danger. Yet, in the tragedy of Don Sebastian, when the king of Portugal is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of Afric; the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

*Muley Moluch.* What shall I do to conquer thee?

*Seb.* Impossible;

*Souls know no conquerors.*

*M. Mol.* I'll show thee for a monster through my Afric.

*Seb.* No, thou canst only show me for a man :

Afric is stored with monsters ; man's a prodigy

Thy subjects have not seen.

*M. Mol.* Thou talk'st as if

Still at the head of battle.

*Seb.* Thou mistakest,

For there I would not talk.

*Benducar, the Minister.* Sure he would sleep.

This conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comic, because it wants the probability necessary to representations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonery and farce.

The same play affords a smart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of Sebastian, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat :

—No more replies,

But see thou do'st it : Or—

To which Dorax answers,

Choke in that threat : I can say or, as loud.

A thousand instances of such impropriety might be produced, were not one scene in *Aureng-Zebe* sufficient to exemplify it. *Indamora*, a captive queen, having *Aureng-Zebe* for her lover, employs *Arimant*, to whose charge she had been intrusted, and whom she had made sensible of her charms, to carry a message to his rival.

*ARIMANT (with a letter in his hand), INDAMORA.*

*Arim.* And I the messenger to him from you ?  
Your empire you to tyranny pursue :

You lay commands, both cruel and unjust,  
To serve my rival, and betray my trust.

*Ind.* You first betray'd your trust in loving me :  
And should not I my own advantage see ?  
Serving my love, you may my friendship gain :  
You know the rest of your pretences vain :  
You must, my Arimant, you must be kind :  
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.

*Arim.* I'll to the king, and strait my trust resign.

*Ind.* His trust you may, but you shall never mine.  
Heaven made you love me for no other end,  
But to become my confidant and friend :  
As such, I keep no secret from your sight,  
And therefore make you judge how ill I write :  
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,  
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.

*Arim.* I ask not Heaven my freedom to restore,

[*Reading.*

But only for your sake—I'll read no more.

And yet I must—

Less for my own, than for your sorrow sad—

[*Reading.*

Another line like this, would make me mad—

Heaven ! she goes on—yet more— and yet more kind !

[*As reading.*

Each sentence is a dagger to my mind.

See me this night—

[*Reading.*

Thank fortune, who did such a friend provide ;

For faithful Arimant shall be your guide.

Not only to be made an instrument,

But pre-engaged without my own consent !

*Ind.* Unknown t'engage you, still augments my score,  
And gives you scope of meriting the more.

*Arim.* The best of men

Some interest in their actions must confess ;

None merit, but in hope they may possess :

The fatal paper rather let me tear,

Than, like Bellerophon, my own sentence bear.

*Ind.* You may ; but 'twill not be your best advice :

'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.

You know you must obey me, soon or late :

Why should you vainly struggle with your fate ?

*Arim.* I thank thee, Heaven ! thou hast been wond'rous  
kind !

Why am I thus to slavery design'd,  
And yet am cheated with a free-born mind !  
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,  
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute—

[*She frowns.*

You frown, and I obey with speed, before  
That dreadful sentence comes, ' See me no more.'

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient ; the contemptible subjection of the lover ; the folly of obliging him to read the letter, only because it ought to have been concealed from him ; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience ; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave ; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power ; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and freewill ; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century which has not debased its most important incidents, and polluted its most serious interlocutions with buffoonery and meanness ; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which, either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The later tragedies, indeed, have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumour of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was *the boast* of their predecessors. Yet they may, at

least, claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

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No. 126. SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1751.

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*Nihil est aliud magnum quàm nulla minuta.*

VET. AUCT.

Sands form the mountain, moments make the year.

YOUNG.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,

“ AMONG other topics of conversation which your papers supply, I was lately engaged in a discussion of the character given by Tranquilla of her lover Venustulus, whom, notwithstanding the severity of his mistress, the greater number seemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

“ One of the company remarked, that prudence ought to be distinguished from fear ; and that if Venustulus was afraid of nocturnal adventures, no man who considered how much every avenue of the town was infested with robbers could think him blameable ; for why should life be hazarded without prospect of honour or advantage ? Another was of opinion that a brave man might be afraid of crossing the river in the calmest weather ; and declared, that, for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be seen tottering in a wooden case, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overset by accident, or

negligence, or by the force of a sudden gust, or the rush of a larger vessel. It was his custom, he said, to keep the security of day-light, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wise man ever perished by water, or was lost in the dark.

“ The next was humbly of opinion, that if Tranquilla had seen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, she would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his safety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not ashamed to confess, that he could not see a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven six times out of his lodgings either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the closet for his servant, whom he called up whenever the enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man should think himself disgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a possibility that a dog might be mad; and that surely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wisdom in flight than contest. By all these declarations another was encouraged to confess, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addresses to Tranquilla, he should have been likely to incur the same censure; for among all the animals upon which nature has impressed deformity and horror, there was none whom he durst not encounter rather than a beetle.

“ Thus, Sir, though cowardice is universally defined too close and anxious an attention to personal safety, there will be found scarcely any fear, however excessive in its degree, or unreasonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a passion which every man feels so frequently predominant in his own breast, that he is unwilling to hear it censured with great asperity; and, per-

haps, if we confess the truth, the same restraint which would hinder a man from declaiming against the frauds of any employment among those who profess it, should withhold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

“ Yet since fortitude is one of those virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly necessary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than against superfluous and panic terrors. Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil ; but its duty, like that of other passions, is not to overbear reason, but to assist it ; nor should it be suffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to raise phantoms of horror, or beset life with supernumerary distresses.

“ To be always afraid of losing life is, indeed, scarcely to enjoy a life that can deserve the care of preservation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at rest. Our present state admits only of a kind of negative security ; we must conclude ourselves safe when we see no danger, or none inadequate to our powers of opposition. Death, indeed, continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly unseen, unless we sharpen our sight by useless curiosity.

“ There is always a point at which caution, however solicitous, must limit its preservatives, because one terror often counteracts another. I once knew one of the speculatists of cowardice, whose reigning disturbance was the dread of house-breakers. His inquiries were for nine years employed upon the best method of barring a window or a door ; and many an hour has he spent in establishing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at last, by the daily super-addition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced ; for one bar was secured by another with such intricacy of subordination, that he was himself not always able to disengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification,



till being asked how he would escape if he was threatened by fire, he discovered that, with all his care and expense, he had only been assisting his own destruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half-locked, that he may not by his own folly perish in the flames.

“ There is one species of terror which those who are unwilling to suffer the reproach of cowardice have wisely dignified with the name of antipathy. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monsters of the wilderness while they are out of sight, will readily confess his antipathy to a mole, a weasel, or a frog. He has, indeed, no dread of harm from an insect or a worm, but his antipathy turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will transport him with as much safety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his antipathy to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies antipathies, till he becomes contemptible to others, and burthensome to himself.

“ It is indeed, certain, that impressions of dread may sometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themselves justly formidable; but when fear is discovered to be groundless, it is to be eradicated like other false opinions, and antipathies are generally superable by a single effort. He that has been taught to shudder at a mouse, if he can persuade himself to risk one encounter, will find his own superiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conquest. I am, SIR, &c.

“ THRASO.”

“ SIR,

“ As you profess to extend your regard to the minuteness of decency, as well as to the dignity of *science*, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of

persecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houses, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

“ Among the ladies who please themselves with splendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice very common to ask every guest how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapestry ; the china at the table, or the plate on the side-board ; and on all occasions to inquire his opinion of their judgement and their choice. Melania has laid her new watch in the window nineteen times, that she may desire me to look upon it. Calista has an art of dropping her snuff-box by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up I may admire it ; and Fulgentia has conducted me, by mistake, into the wrong room, at every visit I have paid since her picture was put into a new frame.

“ I hope, Mr. Rambler, you will inform them, that no man should be denied the privilege of silence, or tortured to false declarations ; and that, though ladies may justly claim to be exempt from rudeness, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To please is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honest praise ; but to seize applause by violence, and call out for commendation, without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a species of tyranny by which modesty is oppressed and sincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration, thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the respect paid to silent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

“ I am, &c.

“ MISOCOLAX.”

“ SIR,

“ YOUR great predecessor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuse among his female readers a desire

of knowledge ; nor can I charge you, though you do not seem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to discourage them from any laudable pursuit. But however either he or you may excite our curiosity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world seems to have formed an universal conspiracy against our understandings ; our questions are supposed not to expect answers, our arguments are confuted with a jest, and we are treated like beings who transgress the limits of our nature whenever we aspire to seriousness or improvement.

“ I inquired yesterday of a gentleman eminent for astronomical skill, what made the day long in summer and short in winter ; and was told that nature protracted the days in summer, lest ladies should want time to walk in the park ; and the nights in winter, lest they should not have hours sufficient to spend at the card-table.

“ I hope you do not doubt but I heard such information with just contempt, and I desire you to discover to this great master of ridicule, that I was far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I asked the question with no other intention than to set him free from the necessity of silence, and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite assembly, from which, however uneasy, he could not then escape, by a kind introduction of the only subject on which I believed him able to speak with propriety.

“ I am, &c.

“ GENEROSA.”

## No. 127. TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 1751.

*Cœpisti meliùs, quàm desinis : ultima primis  
Cedunt : dissimiles hic vir et ille puer.*

OVID. EPIST. IX. 23.

Succeeding years thy early fame destroy ;  
Thou, who began'st a man wilt end a boy.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But, whatever was his intent, it is remarked by Scaliger, that he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of his life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

It is not uncommon for those who at their first entrance into the world were distinguished for attainments or abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised, and to end in neglect and obscurity that life which they began in celebrity and honour. To the long catalogue of the inconveniences of old age, which moral and satirical writers have so copiously displayed, may be often added the loss of fame.

The advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable pursuit, may be compared to the progress of a body driven by a blow. It moves for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the first impulse is perpetually decreasing, and though

it should encounter no obstacle capable of quelling it by a sudden stop, the resistance of the medium through which it passes, and the latent inequalities of the smoothest surface, will, in a short time, by continued retardation, wholly overpower it. Some hindrances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a distance, necessarily loses sight of all that fills up the intermediate space, and, therefore, sets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor suspects a thousand obstacles by which he afterwards finds his passage embarrassed and obstructed. Some are, indeed, stopt at once in their career by a sudden shock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the cross impulse of some violent passion ; but far the greater part languish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight obliquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at what time their ardour forsook them, or when they lost sight of their original design.

Weariness and negligence are perpetually prevailing by silent encroachments, assisted by different causes, and not observed till they cannot, without great difficulty, be opposed. Labour necessarily requires pauses of ease and relaxation, and the deliciousness of ease commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourselves to renew our attempts, but eagerly listen to every argument for frequent interpositions of amusement ; for when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are willing to exert.

It is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking with a false opinion of its facility, or too high conceptions of his own strength, is easily discouraged by the first hindrance of his advances, because he had

promised himself an equal and perpetual progression without impediment or disturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest, where he purposed only to bask in the calm, or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprise greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe, that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned, that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborne by clamour; that in the mingled numbers of mankind, many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and consider every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and a disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates, or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the public has, in almost every man, an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward

has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease ; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren ? He who hath pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that, from those who desire to be considered as his admirers, nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A man, thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides careless and idle down the current of life, without resolution to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulph of mortality.

Others are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of Hannibal, that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that, when he had gained a victory, he should know how to use it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, is often fatal to men of impetuous desire, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who, having borne opposition down before them, and left emulation panting behind, are early persuaded to imagine, that they have reached the heights of perfection, and that now, being no longer in danger from competitors, they may pass the rest of their days in the enjoyment of their acquisitions, in contemplation of their own superiority, and in attention to their own praises, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not sufficiently considered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accomplish, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who stops at any point of excellence is every day sinking in estimation, because his improvement grows continually more incommensurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himself, they who have once been justly celebrated, imagine that they still have the same pretensions to regard, and seldom perceive the diminution of their character while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorse; for if the spendthrift's poverty be imbittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how must the idler's obscurity be clouded by remembering that he once had lustre!

These errors all arise from an original mistake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praises or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applause. But the consideration that life is only deposited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a master who will regard his endeavours, not his success, would have preserved him from trivial elations and discouragements, and enabled him to proceed with constancy and cheerfulness, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by censure.

No. 128. SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1751.

Διὸν δ' ἀσφαλὲς  
οὐκ ἔγινετ' αὐτ' Αἰακίδα παῖρα Πηλεΐ,



Οὐτι παρ' ἀντιβίῳ  
 Κάδμου· λίγονται γι μὲν βροτῶν  
 Ὅλβον ὑπέρστανον εἶ  
 Σχῶν.—

FIXD.

For not the brave, or wise, or great,  
 E'er yet had happiness complete ;  
 Nor Peleus, grandson of the sky,  
 Nor Cadmus, scaped the shafts of pain,  
 Though favour'd by the Powers on high,  
 With every bliss that man can gain.

THE writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil, that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part ; and that, in the condition of men, it frequently happens, that grief and anxiety lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheered by secret radiations of hope and comfort ; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered with flowers, and the mine concealed in the barren crags.

None but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as reason to hypothetical systems, can be persuaded by the most specious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal ; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleasures and vexations, that external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations what another would feel in the same circumstances.

If the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own state, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery ; for how few can forbear to relate *their troubles and distresses* ? If we judge by the

account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we are all placed in an elysian region, overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their understanding, to possess either more than they deserve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclination, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasinesses, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads distraction over half the commercial world, assembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and shakes the nerves of a thousand stock-jobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love, which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope and fear, and steals away the night and day from every other pleasure or employment, is regarded by them whose passions time has extinguished, as an amusement, which can properly raise neither joy nor sorrow, and, though it may be suffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, should always give way to prudence or interest.

He that never had any other desire than to fill a chest with money, or to add another manor to his estate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be astonished to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would

he gape with curiosity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wish but to speak what was never spoken before ; who if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in treating those who will hear them talk ; and if they are poor, neglect opportunities of improving their fortunes for the pleasure of making others laugh ? How slowly would he believe that there are men who would rather lose a legacy than the reputation of a distich ; who think it less disgrace to want money than repartee ; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a contest of raillery is sometimes sufficient to deprive of sleep ; and who would esteem it a lighter evil to miss a profitable bargain by some accidental delay, than not to have thought of a smart reply till the time of producing it was past ? How little would he suspect that this child of idleness and frolic enters every assembly with a beating bosom, like a litigant on the day of decision, and revolves the probability of applause with the anxiety of a conspirator, whose fate depends upon the next night ; that at the hour of retirement he carries home, under a show of airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depressed with disappointment ; and immures himself in his closet, that he may disencumber his memory at leisure, review the progress of the day, state with accuracy his loss or gain of reputation, and examine the causes of his failure of success ?

Yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and restless anxieties, by which female happiness is particularly disturbed. A solitary philosopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and sorrow, lulled in perpetual quiet, and feasted with unmingled pleasure ; for what can interrupt the content of those, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honour

and accumulate immunities ; those to whom rudeness is infamy, and insult is cowardice ; whose eye commands the brave, and whose smile softens the severe ; whom the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate ; who claim tribute from every art and science, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingness to be pleased ?

Surely, among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must have fixed her residence ; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys ; their life must always move either to the slow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness ; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

Such would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty, and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed, which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested, which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniences by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves ; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

There are, indeed, some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of Catullus wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be sometimes sick in the pre-

sent age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains ; a pinner, the pride of Brussels, may be torn by a careless washer ; a picture may drop from a watch ; or the triumph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex, and every condition : all have their cares, either from nature or from folly ; and whoever, therefore, finds himself inclined to envy another, should remember that he knows not the real condition which he desires to obtain, but is certain, that by indulging a vicious passion, he must lessen that happiness which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

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No. 129. TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1751.

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— *Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,  
 Materiam, quâ sis ingeniosus, habes.  
 Possidet et terras, et possidet æquora Minos :  
 Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.  
 Restat iter cælo : cælo tentabimus ire.  
 Da veniam cæpto, Jupiter alte, meo.*

OID. ARS AM. li. 33.

Now, Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,  
 A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind !  
 Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand ;  
 Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land.  
 The skies are open—let us try the skies :  
 Forgive, great Jove, the daring enterprise.

MORALISTS, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endea-

vouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation ; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice ; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of error, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topics of moral declamation, may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burthens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected ; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigid wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking ; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though therefore *danger or difficulty* should not be avoided merely be-

cause we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace, yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger which approaches nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide ; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity ; and according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path, which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed ; but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed ; the care, therefore, of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder, that temerity has been generally censured ; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius ; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of

presupposing impossibilities, and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interest from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger ; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits ; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured ; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish ; but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudices of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that power is never far from necessity. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which



our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a close examination ; and we learn that it is impossible to determine, without experience, how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses, when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have reposed in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked, undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossible ; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much, can, indeed, be the lot of few, but to add something, how

ever little, every one may hope ; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain, that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

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No. 130. SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1751.

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*Non sic prata novo pere decentia  
 Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor,  
 Scæviti solstitio cum medius dies :—  
 Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis  
 Memento rapitur, nullaue non dies  
 Formosi spoliū corporis abstulit,  
 Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono  
 Confidat fragili ?*

SENECA.

Not faster in the summer's ray,  
 The spring's frail beauty fades away,  
 Than anguish and decay consume  
 The smiling virgin's rosy bloom.  
 Some beauty's snatch'd each day, each hour ;  
 For beauty is a fleeting flower :  
 Then how can wisdom e'er confide  
 In beauty's momentary pride ?

ELPHINSTON.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,  
 “ You have very lately observed, that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own ; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before other eyes ; but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds pre-occupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well-disposed colours or harmonious sounds

can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing, or of sight.

“ I am so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have, on so many occasions, discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or, without the help of some female speculatist, be able to understand it.

“ I was born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted, with triumphant fondness, the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

“ She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others dimples in a wrong place.

“ As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any ac-

cident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle : she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form ; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle ; she snatched away my book, because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle ; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk, lest I should swell my ankle with a sprain. At night, I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day ; and was never permitted to sleep, till I had passed through the cosmetic discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water, and May-dews ; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples and clear discolorations.

“ I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks ; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother’s chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compliments and prognostications of all that approached me.

“ My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellences as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered

necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. Ariet used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve, I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgement.

“ At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display, in the open world, those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a public night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the mantua-makers were harassed with directions and alterations.

“ At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight-errant at his first sally. Scholars have told me of a Spartan matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield, or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion of equal glory, with a command to show that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

“ I went, and was received like other pleasing novelties with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crowded about me, and wit and splendour contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which

were made more pleasing by the apparent envy of those whom my presence exposed to neglect, and returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmost wishes, and from this time stood in the first rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the Mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to rise into fashion, and censured by those whom age or disappointment forced to retire.

“ My mother, who pleased herself with the hopes of seeing my exaltation, dressed me with all the exuberance of finery ; and when I represented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that she should scorn the reptile who could inquire after the fortune of a girl like me. <sup>4</sup> She advised me to prosecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deserve the honour of being enchained for ever.

“ My lovers were indeed so numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I should seem to give the preference. But having been steadily and industriously instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art ; and yet when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence ; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married Lavinia with less

beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

“ The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the advancement of women as literature and wit, which generally frightened away those that could make the best settlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philosophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obscurity. She, therefore, enjoined me to improve my minuet-step with a new French dancing-master, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

“ I had now almost completed my nineteenth year: if my charms had lost any of their softness, it was more than compensated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was supplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when in the midst of my hopes and schemes I was seized by that dreadful malady which has so often put a sudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with transport at its own reflection, and saw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve, all that had procured me honours or praises, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty, and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those

who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

“ Having thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if by publishing this you show any regard for the correspondence of,

“ SIR, &c.

“ VICTORIA.”

No. 131. TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1751.

—*Fatis accede deisque,  
Et cole felices ; miseros fuge. Sidera cælo  
Ut distant, et flamma mari, sic utile recto.*

LUCAN.

Still follow where auspicious fates invite :  
Caress the happy, and the wretched slight,  
Sooner shall jarring elements unite,  
Than truth with gain, than interest with right.

F. LEWIS.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amidst the innumerable varieties of inclination that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring than in the wish for riches ; a wish indeed so prevalent, that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind, are only subordinate species and different modifications.

Wealth is the general centre of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable ten-



dency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate design, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth, therefore, all unanimously confess the value, nor is there any disagreement but about the use.

No desire can be formed which riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his happiness in splendid equipage or numerous dependants, in refined praise or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curiosities, or the revels of luxury, in splendid edifices or wide plantations, must still either by birth or acquisition possess riches. They may be considered as the elemental principles of pleasure, which may be combined with endless diversity; as the essential and necessary substance, of which only the form is left to be adjusted by choice.

The necessity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almost every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied in arts by which life is furnished with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never

procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little inquiry will discover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies of art, or up the steepes of labour; what wisdom and virtue scarcely receive at the close of life, as the recompense of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures: the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falsehood; and the possessions of ignorance and imbecility are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover, that riches always procure protection for themselves, that they dazzle the eyes of inquiry, divert the celerity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to inquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour, and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the certainty of obtaining by every accession of advantage an addition of security, have so far prevailed upon the passions of mankind, that the peace of life is destroyed by a general and incessant struggle for riches. It is observed of gold, by an old epigrammatist, that 'to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in sorrow.' There is no condition which is not disquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man

may be divided in a political estimate between those who are practising fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present state of the world, it will be found that all confidence is lost among mankind, that no man ventures to act, where money can be endangered, upon the faith of another. It is impossible to see the long scrolls in which every contract is included, with all their appendages of seals and attestation, without wondering at the depravity of those beings, who must be restrained from violation of promise by such formal and public evidences, and precluded from equivocation and subterfuge by such punctilious minuteness. Among all the satires to which folly and wickedness have given occasion, none is equally severe with a bond or settlement.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the first view irreconcilable with the laws of virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and justice; and the rest are on every side so entangled with dubious tendencies, and so beset with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteristics of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of possessions; strife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent passion was stifled by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but such times can return no more. Community of possession must include spontaneity of production; for what is obtain-

ed by labour will be of right the property of him by whose labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleasure or to affluence must be procured either by slow industry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience incite to more safe and more speedy methods, who strive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to share the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In later ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is exposed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty ; they have suppressed desire by cutting off the possibility of gratification, and secured their peace by destroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet subjection. But by debarring themselves from evil, they have rescinded many opportunities of good ; they have too often sunk into inactivity and uselessness ; and though they have forborne to injure society, have not fully paid their contributions to its happiness.

While riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness, by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only against reputation ; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety.

## No. 132. SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1751.

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— *Dociles imitandis*

*Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.*—

JUV. SAT. XIV. 40.

The mind of mortals, in perverseness strong,  
Imbibes with dire docility the wrong.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ MR. RAMBLER,

“ I WAS bred a scholar, and after the usual course of education, found it necessary to employ, for the support of life, that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative professions drew my regard with equal attraction; each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

“ There is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited inquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise, and the mind fluctuates between different purposes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often spent the first hours of the day, in considering to what study I should devote the rest; and at last snatched up any author that lay upon the table, or, perhaps, fled to a coffee-house for deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude.

“ Thus my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less, till I was roused from my literary slumber by a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum, that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice, if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of distress, and obliged to endeavour after some certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their last acre in a drawer, and, without the least interruption of their tranquillity, or abatement of their expenses, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to such dignity of imprudence, or such exaltation above the cares and necessities of life: I, therefore, immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might set me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out some final scheme of lasting advantage.

“ My friends were struck with honest solicitude, and immediately promised their endeavours for my extrication. They did not suffer their kindness to languish by delay, but prosecuted their inquiries with such success, that in less than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of prospects.

“ I had, however, no time for long pauses of consideration: and, therefore, soon resolved to accept the office of instructing a young nobleman in the house of his father: I went to the seat at which the family then happened to reside, was received with great politeness, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were such as I should willingly have accepted, though my fortune had al-

lowed me greater liberty of choice : the respect with which I was treated flattered my vanity ; and, perhaps, the splendour of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the proposals, and received the young lord into my care.

“ Having no desire to gain more than I should truly deserve, I very diligently prosecuted my undertaking, and had the satisfaction of discovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehension, and a retentive memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wise and useful counsellor to the state, though my labours were somewhat obstructed by want of authority, and the necessity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man whose imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a studious life had made all the common amusements insipid and contemptible, it was not very easy to suppress his indignation, when he saw himself forsaken in the midst of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an insect, and found his instructions debarred from access to the intellectual faculties, by the memory of a childish frolic, or the desire of a new plaything.

“ Those vexations would have recurred less frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he should be excused from a task as a reward for some petty compliance, and withholding him from his book at another, to gratify herself or her visitants with his vivacity, shown him that every thing was more pleasing and more important than knowledge, and that study was to be endured rather than chosen, and was only the business of those hours which pleasure left vacant, or discipline usurped.

“ I thought it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of these frequent avocations ; but was answered, that rank and fortune might reasonably hope for some indulgence ; that the retardation of my pupil’s progress would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine ; and that with the success which satisfied every body else, I might surely satisfy myself. I had now done my duty, and without more remonstrances, continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they could be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that, by degrees, my scholar began to feel the quick impulses of curiosity, and the honest ardour of studious ambition.

“ At length it was resolved to pass a winter in London. The lady had too much fondness for her son to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuse her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the public. I remonstrated against too early an acquaintance with cards and company ; but with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to show him the world ; nothing was more a brand of meanness than bashful timidity ; gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent intercourse with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies ; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, that he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of the ladies, without the readiness of reply and activity of officiousness remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in London.

“ Again I found resistance hopeless, and again



thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat, was immediately dazzled with a thousand beams of novelty and show. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleasure that passed before him, and it was impossible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the sounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was disturbed by a rich suit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accustomed to a plain dress, he could not at first survey without ecstasy.

“ The arrival of the family was now formally notified ; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more distant acquaintances to the door ; and my pupil was indiscriminately introduced to all, that he might accustom himself to change of faces, and be rid with speed of his rustic diffidence. He soon endeared himself to his mother by the speedy acquisition or recovery of her darling qualities : his eyes sparkle at a numerous assembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the infection of high life, and has no other test of principles or actions than the quality of those to whom they are ascribed. He begins already to look down on me with superiority, and submits to one short lesson in a week, as an act of condescension rather than obedience ; for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot speak French ; and having formerly learned a few familiar phrases from his sister’s governess, he is every day soliciting his *mamma* to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his conversation. I am not yet in-

sulted, but find myself likely to become soon a superfluous encumbrance, for my scholar has now no time for science, or for virtue; and the lady yesterday declared him so much the favourite of every company, that she was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

“ I am, &c.

“ EUMATHES.”

No. 133. TUESDAY, JUNE 25 1751.

*Magna quidem sacris quæ dat præcepta libellis  
Victrix fortunæ sapientia. Dicimus autem  
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,  
Nec jactare jugum vitæ didicere magistrâ.*

JUV. SAT. xiii. 19.

Let Stoics ethics' haughty rules advance  
To combat fortune, and to conquer chance;  
Yet happy those, though not so learn'd are thought,  
Whom life instructs, who by experience taught,  
For new to come from past misfortunes look,  
Nor shake the yoke, which galls the more 'tis shook.

CREECH.

“ TO THE RAMBLER.

“ SIR,  
“ You have shown, by the publication of my letter that you think the life of Victoria not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philosopher: I shall therefore continue my narrative without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

“ When my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my strength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother dismissed me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstasy ; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy ; for after a thousand trifling inquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh, that I should never more be fit to be seen.

“ At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition ; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemned to be tortured into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiousness of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance admit, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the scars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former smoothness ; and sometimes I was punished with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new skin. The cosmetic science was exhaust-

ed upon me ; but who can repair the ruins of nature ! My mother was forced to give me rest at last, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toast, whose fortune she considered as a hopeless game, no longer worthy of solicitude or attention.

“ The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the sudden blast of disease wrinkles in her bloom, is indeed sufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power ; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity ; all that filled her days with pleasure, and her nights with hope ; all that gave gladness to the present hour, or brightened her prospects of futurity. It is perhaps not in the power of a man whose attention has been divided by diversity of pursuits, and who has not been accustomed to derive from others much of his happiness, to image to himself such helpless destitution, such dismal inanity. Every object of pleasing contemplation is at once snatched away, and the soul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent desire ; the faculties of anticipation slumber in despondency, or the powers of pleasure mutiny for employment.

“ I was so little able to find entertainment for myself, that I was forced in a short time to venture abroad, as the solitary savage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of disgrace into assemblies where I had lately sparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had misrepresented me to myself, and that the remains of my former face might yet have some attraction and influence : but the first circle of visits convinced me, that my reign was at an end ; that life and death were no longer in my hands ; that I was no more to

practise the glance of command or the frown of prohibition ; to receive the tribute of sighs and praises, or to be soothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my proposals were unregarded ; the narrowness of my knowledge, and the meanness of my sentiments, were easily discovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged against the judgement ; and it was observed, by those who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my understanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

“ It is scarcely to be imagined how soon the mind sinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long considered all who approached me as vassals, condemned to regulate their pleasures by my eyes, and harass their inventions for my entertainment, was in less than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with professions of obligation ; to catch with eagerness at a compliment ; and to watch with all the anxiousness of dependence, lest any little civility that was paid me should pass unacknowledged.

“ Though the negligence of the men was not very pleasing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more supportable than the insolence of my own sex. For the first ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a single house in which the memory of my downfall was not revived. At one place, I was congratulated on my escape with life ; at another, I heard the benefits of early inoculation ; by some I have been told in express terms, that I am not without my charms ; others have whispered at my entrance, ‘ This is the celebrated beauty.’ One told me of a wash that would smooth *the skin* ; and another offered me her chair that I *might not front the light*. Some soothed me with

the observation that none can tell how soon my case may be her own ; and some thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderness, formal condolence, and consolatory blandishments.

“ Thus was I every day harassed with all the stratagems of well-bred malignity ; yet insolence was more tolerable than solitude, and I therefore persisted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of resentment or depression. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away ; that the joy of their superiority would end with its novelty ; and that I should be suffered to glide along in my present form among the nameless multitude, whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

“ This was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of resistance and effort of perseverance, I found more sensibly the want of those entertainments which had formerly delighted me ; the day rose upon me without an engagement, and the evening closed in its natural gloom, without summoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amusements for me, and I had no power of amusing myself. Idleness exposed me to melancholy, and life began to languish in motionless indifference.

“ Misery and shame are nearly allied. It was not without many struggles that I prevailed on myself to confess my uneasiness to Euphemia, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at last laid my calamities before her, rather to ease my heart than receive assistance, ‘ We must distinguish,’ said she, ‘ my Victoria, those evils which are imposed by Providence, from those to which we ourselves give the power of hurting us. Of your

calamity, a small part is the infliction of Heaven, the rest is little more than the corrosion of idle discontent. You have lost that which may indeed sometimes contribute to happiness, but to which happiness is by no means inseparably annexed. You have lost what the greater number of the human race never have possessed ; what those on whom it is bestowed for the most part possess in vain ; and what you, while it was yours, knew not how to use : you have only lost early what the laws of nature forbid you to keep long, and have lost it while your mind is yet flexible, and while you have time to substitute more valuable and more durable excellencies. Consider yourself, my Victoria, as a being born to know, to reason, and to act ; rise at once from your dream of melancholy to wisdom and to piety ; you will find that there are other charms than those of beauty, and other joys than the praise of fools.”

“ I am SIR, &c.

“ VICTORIA.”

END OF VOL. XVII.

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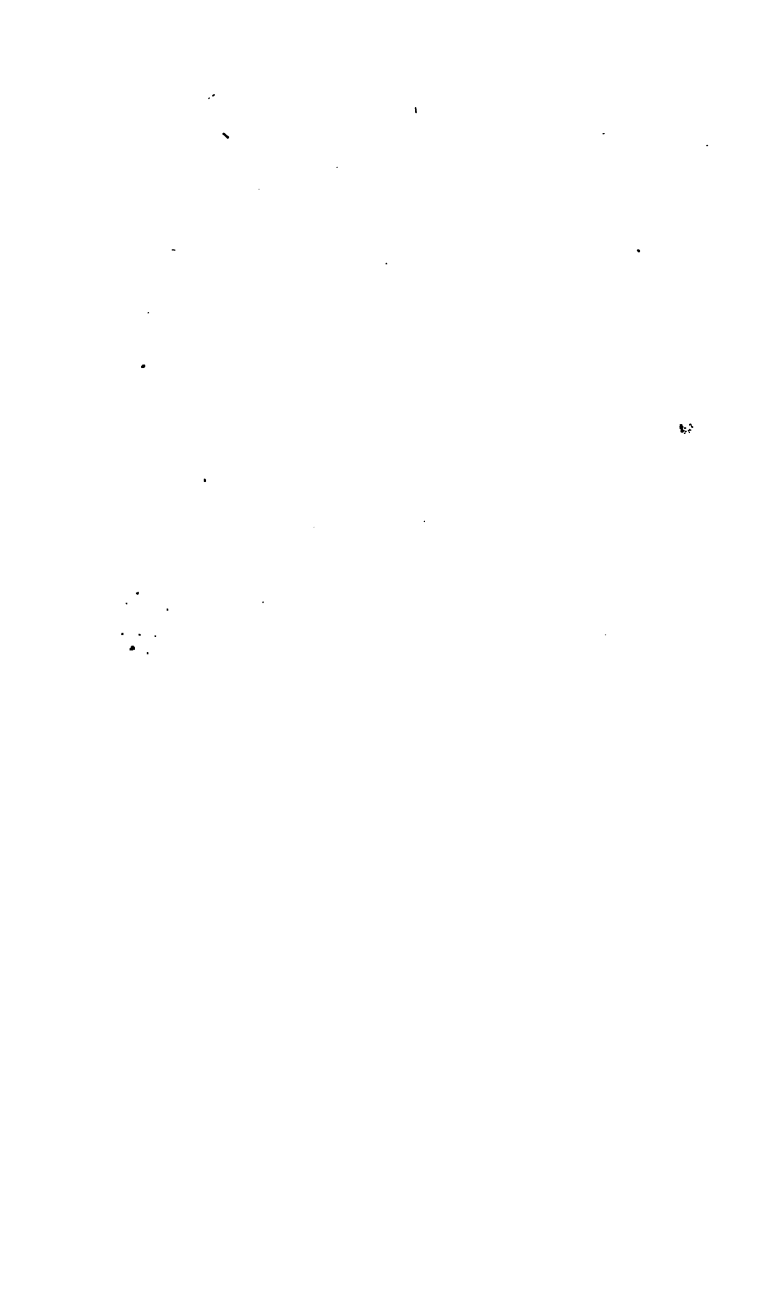
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